CIVIL SOCIETY ELITES

Field Studies from Cambodia and Indonesia

Edited by
Astrid Norén-Nilsson,
Amalinda Savirani
and Anders Uhlin

PolGov
RESEARCH CENTRE FOR POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT
Department of Politics & Government - FISIPOL UGM

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Nordic Institute of Asian Studies
NIAS Topics in Asian Studies, no. 80

First published in 2023 by NIAS Press
NIAS – Nordic Institute of Asian Studies
Øster Farimagsgade 5, 1353 Copenhagen K, Denmark
Tel: +45 3532 9503 • Fax: +45 3532 9549
E-mail: books@nias.ku.dk • Online: www. niaspress. dk

Published with the support of
Lund University, Sweden.

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A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN 978-87-7694-328-8 Hbk
ISBN 978-87-7694-329-5 Pbk
ISBN 978-87-7694-733-0 open access Ebk
ISBN 978-87-7694-734-7 open access PDF
DOI: https://doi.org/10.55673/tAsmN8ty
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Typeset in Arno Pro by Don Wagner
Printed and bound in the United Kingdom by Printforce
Cover design: NIAS Press

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Preface

Having for a long time engaged in research about on the one hand civil society and on the other hand political and economic elites in Southeast Asia, we began to find the civil society/elite dichotomy increasingly problematic. Viewing civil society actors as always opposed to the "elite" simply did not seem to fit with the reality in many contexts. Moreover, the simplistic distinction between civil society and elites, which has so far been prevalent in research as well as practitioner discourses, overlooked the influence and impact of some civil society leaders in wider society. These reflections were the starting point for the research project *Civil Society Elites: New Perspectives on Civil Society in Cambodia and Indonesia* that involved researchers from Lund University, Sweden, researchers from Gadjah Mada University, Indonesia, and researchers in Cambodia. This book reports the main findings of our joint research within this project. We thank all contributors for their dedicated work over the years. We have also benefited from excellent external input at workshops and conferences. Moreover, we are very grateful to all the research participants in Cambodia and Indonesia who have taken their time to answer our questions in interviews. Additionally, we are most grateful for the constructive peer review feedback and to our editor and the publishing team at NIAS Press for their support and professional handling of the book. We also extend our gratitude to the Swedish Research Council whose generous funding has made the book possible. Finally, we would like to thank our families. Astrid thanks her family for their support during the writing and editing of the book, and Åsa, Moit, Francis and Leander for their company during fieldwork. Amalinda thanks Randu and his father for their insurmountable support and tolerance, in writing and completing the book. Anders thanks Alva and Ameli for their love and patience.

Lund and Yogyakarta, 11 November 2022
Astrid Norén-Nilsson, Amalinda Savirani, and Anders Uhlin

Contributors

Norin Abheseka has been a researcher at the Research Centre for Politics and Government (PolGov), Department of Politics and Government, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia (2018–2019).

Haryanto is a Professor of Political Science at the Department of Politics and Government, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia. He has published many books and academic articles about elites in Indonesian politics.

Kimhean Hok is a doctoral student at the Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies, Lund University. His research deals with the politics of development and social and political change, with a particular focus on Cambodia.

Ignasius Jaques Juru is a researcher at the Research Centre for Politics and Government (PolGov), Department of Politics and Government, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia. He has been involved in many research projects on democracy, citizenship, civil society, tolerance and border politics.

Cornelis Lay (1959–2020) was a Professor of Political Science at the Department of Politics and Government, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia. He published many academic articles about civil society and democracy in Indonesian politics.

Astrid Norén-Nilsson is a Senior Lecturer at the Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies, Lund University, Sweden. Her scholarship focuses on the politics of Cambodia in the post-conflict reconstruction era (1993–).

Desi Rahmawati is a researcher at the Research Centre for Politics and Government (PolGov), Department of Politics and Government, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia. She has published on civil society and local democracy in Indonesia.

Willy Purna Samadhi is a researcher at the Department of Politics and Government, Universitas Gadjah Mada, and a lecturer at the Department of Political Science, Universitas Pembangunan Nasional Veteran Jakarta

(UPNVJ), Indonesia. He has published several articles on civil society and pro-democracy movements in Indonesia.

Purwo Santoso is a professor of politics at the Department of Politics and Government, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia. He has published many academic articles on governance, public policy and local government in Indonesia.

Amalinda Savirani is an Associate Professor at the Department of Politics and Government, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia. She has published many books and academic articles on civil society movements in Indonesia.

Anders Uhlin is a Professor of Political Science at Lund University, Sweden. He has published widely on civil society activism, particularly in Southeast Asia.

Indah Surya Wardhani is a researcher at the Research Centre for Politics and Government (PolGov), Department of Politics and Government, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia. Her research focuses on governance and local democracy in Indonesia.

A team of Cambodian researchers, who authored chapters 3 and 9, was led by a distinguished scholar of Cambodian politics. Due to changed circumstances, the authors decided not to assert their authorship of the chapters at the time of publication.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

ACs	Agricultural Cooperatives
AcSI	Active Society Institute
ADHOC	Cambodian Human Rights and Development Association
AMAN	*Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara* (Archipelago Indigenous Community Alliance)
ANRI	*Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia* (Indonesia National Archives)
APPeK	*Advokasi Pemberdayaan dan Pengembangan Kampung* (Village Empowerment and Development Advocacy)
ARDB	The Agricultural and Rural Development Bank
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BAPPEDA	*Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Daerah* (Local Development Planning Agency)
BAWASLU	*Badan Pengawas Pemilu* (Election Supervisory Agency)
BPHN	*Badan Pembinaan Hukum Nasional* (National Law Development Agency)
BPN	*Badan Pertanahan Nasional* (National Land Agency)
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CCC	Cambodia Chamber of Commerce
CCHR	Cambodian Centre for Human Rights
CDA	Children's Development Association
CD-Centre	Cambodia Development Centre
CEDAC	Cambodian Centre for Study and Development in Agriculture
CF	Community Forest
CFAP	Cambodian Farmer Federation Association of Agricultural Producers
CFI	Community Forests International
CiC	Cambodia Investors Club Association
CIS Timor	Circle of Imagined Society Timor
CNRP	Cambodia National Rescue Party

CO	Community Organising
CPA	Community Protected Area
CPP	Cambodian People's Party
CRC	Cambodian Red Cross
CRF	Cambodia Rice Federation
CS	Cambodia Scouts
CSAF	Civil Society Alliance Forum
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CYN	Cambodian Youth Network
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DMC	Department of Media and Communication at the Royal University of Phnom Penh
DPMD	*Dinas Pemberdayaan Masyarakat Desa* (Office for Rural Society Empowerment)
EWMI	East–West Management Institute
FACT	Fisheries Action Coalition Team
FAs	Farmer Associations
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FITRA	*Forum Indonesia untuk Transparansi Anggaran* (Indonesian Forum for Budget Transparency)
FoEI	Friends of the Earth International
FPPD	*Forum Pengembangan Pembaharuan Desa* (Forum for Development and Rural Reform)
FPPM	*Forum Pengembangan Partisipasi Masyarakat* (Forum for Advancing Public Participation)
FUNCINPEC	*Front Uni National Pour un Cambodge Indépendant, Neutre, Pacifique et Coopératif* (The National United Front for an Independent, Neutral, Peaceful and Cooperative Cambodia)
GDP	Grassroots Democratic Party
GIFT	Global Initiative for Fiscal Transparency
GMIT	*Gereja Masehi Injil di Timor* (Christian Evangelical Church in Timor)
GMKI	*Gerakan Mahasiswa Kristen Indonesia* (Indonesian Christian Student Movement)
GMNI	*Gerakan Mahasiswa Nasional Indonesia* (Indonesian Nationalist Student Movement)

HIF	Handicap International Federation
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
HiVOS	*Humanistisch Instituut voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking* (Humanist Institute for Development Cooperation)
HMI	*Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam* (Muslim Student's Association)
HRP	Human Rights Party
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ICW	Indonesian Corruption Watch
IDLO	International Development Law Organisation
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFC	International Finance Cooperation
INFID	International NGO Forum on Indonesian Development
Infight	Indonesian Front in Defence of Human Rights
INGI	International NGO Forum on Indonesian Development
INSIST	Indonesian Society for Social Transformation
IO	International Organisation
IPM	*Ikatan Pelajar Muhammadiyah* (Muhammadiyah Student Union)
ISTF	International Society for Tropical Foresters
JCI	Junior Chamber International
Kalabahu	*Karya Latihan Bantuan Hukum* (Legal Aid Training and Workshop)
KARSA	*Lingkar Pembaruan Desa dan Agraria* (Forum for Village and Agrarian Reform)
KAS	*Konrad Adenauer Stiftung*
Kesbangpol	*Badan Kesatuan Bangsa dan Politik* (Resilience and National Unity Body)
Korsup	*Koordinator dan Supervisi Program* (Coordination and Supervision Programmes)
KPA	*Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria* (Consortium for Agrarian Reform)
KPK	*Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi* (Corruption Eradication Commission)
KPRM	*Komite Perjuangan Rakyat Miskin Makassar* (Committee of Disadvantaged Defenders)

KSP	*Kantor Staf Presiden* (Presidential Staff Office)
KUFNS	Kampuchean United Front for National Salvation
KUKAIP	*Koalisi untuk Kebebasan Akses Informasi Publik* (Coalition for Free Access to Public Information)
LANGO	Law on Association and Non-Governmental Organisations
LBH Jakarta	*Lembaga Bantuan Hukum Jakarta* (Jakarta Legal Aid Institute)
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender
LICADHO	Cambodian League for the Promotion and Defence of Human Rights
LP3ES	*Lembaga Penelitian, Pendidikan dan Penerangan Ekonomi dan Sosial* (Institute for Social and Economic Research)
LPHAM	*Lembaga Pembela Hak-Hak Asasi Manusia* (Defenders of Human Rights)
LPSM	*Lembaga Pengembangan Swadaya Masyarakat* (Organisation for Community Self-Empowerment)
LSM	*Lembaga Swadaya Masyarakat* (Non-governmental Organisation)
LSP	*Lembaga Studi Pembangunan* (Development Studies Institute)
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
MCF	Monks' Community Forest
MoEYS	Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NKK/BKK	*Normalisasi Kehidupan Kampus/Badan Koordinasi Kemahasiswaan* (Campus Life Normalisation/Students Coordination Bureau)
NU	*Nahdlatul Ulama* (Revival of the Ulama)
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OGS	Open Government Society
Ornop	*Organisasi non-pemerintah* (Non-governmental organisations)
P3M	*Perhimpunan Pengembangan Pesantren dan Masyarakat* (Association of Pesantren and Community Development)

PAN	*Partai Amanat Nasional* (National Mandate Party)
Papernas	*Partai Persatuan Pembebasan Nasional* (National Liberty Union Party)
PASS	Paññāsāstra University of Cambodia Student Senate
PBO	Peace Bridge Organisation
PC	Perspectives Cambodia
PDI-P	*Partai Demokrasi Indonesia-Perjuangan* (Indonesian Democratic Party – Struggle)
PHI	*Partai Hijau Indonesia* (Green Party of Indonesia)
PIA	*Perempuan Indonesia Anti-Korupsi* (Indonesian Women Against Corruption)
PIAR	*Perkumpulan Pengembangan Inisiatif dan Advokasi Rakyat* (Association for Development Initiative and People's Advocacy)
PKB	*Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa* (National Awakening Party)
PKBI	*Perkumpulan Keluarga Berencana Indonesia* (Indonesian Association for Family Planning)
PKI	*Partai Komunis Indonesia* (Indonesian Communist Party)
PKNU	*Partai Kebangkitan Nasional Ulama* (Ulama National Awakening Party)
PLCN	Prey Lang Community Network
PMKRI	*Perhimpunan Mahasiswa Katolik Republik Indonesia* (Union of Catholic University Students of The Republic of Indonesia)
PNI	*Partai Nasional Indonesia* (Indonesian Nationalist Party)
POPOR	*Partai Persatuan Oposisi Rakyat* (Peoples' Opposition Alliance Party)
PPR	*Partai Perserikatan Rakyat* (People's Alliance Party)
PUC	Paññāsāstra University of Cambodia
PWD	Power, Welfare and Democracy
PWYP	Publish What You Pay
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation+
RGC	Royal Government of Cambodia
SADAR	*Persaudaraan Pedagang Pasar Terong* (Association of Terong Market Traders)
SADP	Southeast Asia Development Programme

SAF	Strategic Action Fields
SAKTI	*Sekolah Anti-Korupsi* (Anti-Corruption School)
Sanlima	*Yayasan Peduli Sesama* (Foundation for Care for Humanity)
SID	*Sistem Informasi Desa* (Village Information System)
SMEs	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
SPAK	*Saya Perempuan Anti-Korupsi* (I'm an Anti-Corruption Woman)
SRI	System of Rice Intensification
SRP	*Sekolah Rakyat Petani* (School for Farmers)
SSEAYP	Ship for Southeast Asian and Japanese Youth Program
TAF	The Asia Foundation
TANI	Tanete Institute
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
UNCTAD	The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNTAC	United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia
UPC	Urban Poor Consortium
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UYFC	Union of Youth Federations of Cambodia
VIS	Village Information System
WALHI	*Wahana Lingkungan Hidup* (Indonesian Forum for the Environment)
WWF	World Wildlife Fund
YAC	Youth Association of Cambodia
YAO	*Yayasan Alfa Omega* (Alfa Omega Foundation)
YAPPIKA	*Yayasan Penguatan Partisipasi, Inisiatif dan Kemitraan Masyarakat Indonesia* (Foundation for Strengthening Participation, Initiative and Partnerships in Indonesian Society)
Yasmara	*Yayasan Masyarakat Sejahtera* (Prosperous Communities Foundation)
YLBHI	*Yayasan Lembaga Bantuan Hukum Indonesia* (Indonesian Legal Aid Foundation)
YLKI	*Yayasan Lembaga Konsumen Indonesia* (Indonesian Consumers' Institution Foundation)

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Studying Civil Society Elite Formation and Interaction

Astrid Norén-Nilsson
Amalinda Savirani
Anders Uhlin

A charismatic Cambodian Buddhist monk emerges as the celebrated leader of a forest conservation network. Starting out as an ordinary monk whose one defining characteristic is his deep love for the evergreen forest of the Thai–Cambodian border, he is able, step by step, not only to mobilise monks in his own pagoda but also to gain widespread support from the local community and local authorities. He proceeds to earn the support of the national *sangha* (Buddhist monkhood) and finally that of the Prime Minister himself, resulting in the creation of a large wildlife sanctuary. The achievement is remarkable: other nature preservation initiatives taken by socially engaged Buddhists in the country have all been unsuccessful.

In Indonesia, a long-time legal aid and human rights activist emerges as a prominent figure in anti-corruption advocacy. Despite his lack of professional training on issues of corruption, he establishes a leading position in the anti-corruption sector. As one of the founders of a nationally-respected anti-corruption civil society organisation (CSO), his reputation grows until it has a global reach and he becomes the secretary general of the Indonesian branch of an international anti-corruption organisation. Many other ambitious activists in the country do not make it to top positions within major CSOs that have an impact in wider society. What resources do the monk and the legal aid and anti-corruption activist draw on to gain elite status within civil society and become influential public figures?

An activist rises in prominence through her engagement in a string of ruling party-affiliated youth organisations, starting in adolescence. With peers and friends made through one of the government-sponsored youth initiatives, she co-initiates a platform for debate among young people on social and political issues. The initiative targets university students, in response to a rise in critical voices among the young, and reframes their concerns in terms of problem-solving. The achievement is crowned by an appointment to the top technical position on youth at the Cambodian Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. Here, she is invited to develop a similar initiative to the one she developed through the civil society youth platform, but now under the auspices of the Ministry.

After Joko Widodo (Jokowi) assumes power in the 2014 Indonesian election, many civil society activists become part of his 'West Wing' office, tasked with providing input to the development of the president's strategic policies. Others become consultants for ministries, on diverse issues ranging from the environment, climate change, forestry, land and spatial planning to gender issues, or they become part of ad-hoc 'expert teams' assisting local governments. Other civil society activists enter political parties from across the ideological spectrum, and are elected members of parliament. When Jokowi is re-elected in 2019, some of these activists become ministers, and some of them retain their seats as parliamentarians. What drives and enables such boundary crossing between civil society and the state, and what particular opportunities are perceived to be associated with the two fields, respectively?

These stories from the ground in Cambodia and Indonesia suggest a new direction for civil society research, focusing on power relations, resources, and elite status – both within civil society and in relation to the state and other social spheres. Given the high expectations that others have of civil society actors in relation to solving pressing societal problems, including through accessing state actors and donors, processes of elitisation and power inequalities within civil society matter – both from a theoretical and a policy point of view. In a developing country context, promoting civil society has become an important aspect of development aid. In new and unstable democracies, as well as in less-than-democratic contexts, civil society actors are frequently targeted as aid recipients, based on the assumption that they will provide a counter-balance to the power of the state, connect with the grassroots, and contribute to fighting poverty as well as promoting democracy (Beichelt et al. 2014). While acknowledging that some civil society actors are important

agents for poverty reduction, sustainable development and democratisation, stories such as those above challenge a narrow understanding of civil society as consisting primarily of normatively-driven formal NGOs, carrying out development projects and acting as a counter-balance to state power. They also challenge a view of civil society entities as relatively isolated from the state and from political and economic society (Cohen & Arato 1994). The boundaries of the four spheres are blurred: civil society actors can transform their roles and move between the four realms.

In this book, we develop the concept of a civil society elite: a group of people holding dominant positions within civil society and often exercising significant influence beyond civil society too. Civil society elite is a term that might seem counter-intuitive or even contradictory to many civil society scholars as well as practitioners. This is precisely because it focuses attention on the top of civil society rather than the grassroots and highlights power relations within civil society and the resultant development of elite groups within as well as beyond this social sphere. To make this argument, we bring together two fields of research – civil society studies and elite studies – into an analysis of civil society elites, defined as being made up of individuals holding dominant positions in issue area-specific fields (such as agriculture, human rights and youth), in the field of civil society, or even in society more broadly. Despite much research on processes leading to concentration of power and influence in different arenas of social, political and economic life – the formation of elites – scholars have not yet systematically explored the possibility of a civil society elite, or the implications of this for the roles that civil society actors can play. At the same time, the existence of power asymmetries within civil society is frequently observed. Marxist and other critical perspectives on civil society have long pointed out that there are conflicts, hierarchies and inequalities within civil society (e.g. Cox 1999; Sahoo 2014). In addition, among liberal civil society researchers the notion of civil society as a sphere that is largely conflict-free and egalitarian is increasingly being questioned (e.g. Edwards 2019 xi). Research on the promotion of civil society as part of foreign development aid has suggested that foreign funding may create more inequalities within local civil societies (e.g. Howell & Pearce 2001; Hulme & Edwards [eds] 2013; Van Rooy [ed.] 2014) – between, on the one hand, those who have learned to speak the donor language and have mastered technical aspects of the organisation, and, on the other hand, grassroots members. These competing perspectives, then, highlight different manifestations of

the uneven distribution of power in civil society. Yet this phenomenon has not been investigated using conceptual tools from studies of political and economic elites. This book offers a first systematic analysis of individuals who hold dominant positions in civil society organisations and movements, and their networks of power and influence inside and outside civil society. Our research therefore provides new insights on power dynamics, not only within civil society but also in the context of interactions between civil society and other social spheres.

In what follows, we identify different types of elite formation and elite interaction within and beyond civil society. The following research questions guide the analysis: How are civil society elites formed? How do civil society elites interact, or even integrate, with other elite groups in politics, economics and the state? How does reliance on foreign funding influence processes of elite formation and interaction? We explore these questions, paying particular attention to two comparative dimensions. The first concerns the way in which such processes play out in the specific context of a generally shrinking (Cambodia) and a relatively expanding (Indonesia) political space for civil society. The second refers to how civil society sectors display different patterns of civil society elite formation, interaction and integration.

We address these questions in a set of in-depth case studies of civil society activists, organisations, movements and networks in Cambodia and Indonesia. The studies draw on extensive fieldwork in the two countries and a theoretical framework inspired by Bourdieu's concept of field. Hence, 'field studies' in the book title has a double meaning, indicating our approach both to theory and to data collection. The two countries represent different trajectories of civil society development. Indonesia has experienced expanded political space for civil society during the process of democratisation following the breakdown of the authoritarian Suharto regime in 1998, although with a more recent trend of democratic regression. Cambodia has experienced increasingly shrinking space for civil society activism, especially since around 2015. Situating our research on civil society elites in relation to these contrasting trajectories, the book proposes a rethinking of civil society not only in Cambodia and Indonesia, but also more broadly in the global south, and indeed globally. Processes of elitisation can be expected to take place in civil societies all over the world. Compounding this dynamic, foreign funding leads to a homogenisation of CSOs (Kamstra & Schulpen 2015), which creates similar patterns of elite formation across aid-dependent civil societies. This suggests that our research

agenda has global significance for the study of civil societies worldwide, and resonates in particular with developments in other parts of Asia, Africa and the Americas.

We employ analytical 'thinking tools' deriving from the term 'field' as used by Bourdieu to go beyond easily observable dichotomies and highlight power structures and processes within and beyond civil society. This allows us to map relationships of cooperation and friction that propel some people to reach elite positions, and impede others. Taking this broader perspective, we do not attach a negative connotation to the phenomenon of being a member of a civil society 'elite'. Applying a relational approach to elites as those holding a dominant position within social relations, we consider the emergence of elites in civil society, as in other social spheres, to be inevitable, and use the word 'elite' without normative judgment.

By pioneering the study of civil society elites, the book breaks new research ground in several ways. First, it combines civil society research and elite theory, which enriches both research fields. Second, it sheds new light on the relationship between civil society, the state, political society and economic society, and the possibilities and limitations pertaining to engagement in each field. This has implications for civil society studies across the world. Third, it specifically contributes a new conceptualisation of civil society in Cambodia and Indonesia. The book provides in-depth case studies and unique comparisons across the two Southeast Asian countries, suggesting new directions for civil society research in the region. Fourth, our findings have implications for how to view the role of civil society actors in relation to societal challenges, such as in fighting poverty and promoting democracy. They are therefore significant not only for researchers, but also for policy-makers, funding agencies, development practitioners and civil society activists, in Cambodia and Indonesia specifically, and in low-income countries and in new democratic and authoritarian contexts more generally.

Relation to Extant Research

Civil Society Research

In a broad understanding, civil society is an important aspect of life for most human beings. It can even be argued that '[c]ollective action in search of the good society is a universal part of human experience' (Edwards 2019: 1).

Voluntary associations, which are often central in contemporary notions of civil society, have existed in most parts of the world for hundreds of years (ibid.: 19). Civil society has been a prominent theme in the history of political thought. Classical philosophers made no distinction between civil society and the state. During the Enlightenment, civil society began to be seen as a defence against the oppressive state, a view that is still common in much civil society research inspired by de Tocqueville. A dominant strand in contemporary liberal civil society studies understands civil society as the part of society inhabited by voluntary associations. This neo-Tocquevillian school tends to frequently blend with a normative view of civil society as a kind of society characterised by positive norms and values. Others understand civil society as a public sphere, without necessarily ascribing any normative values to this sphere. Marxists and other critical scholars tend to dismiss the clear analytical boundaries between civil society, state and market, and argue that civil society is also a sphere of domination and resistance, characterised by the same inequalities that exist in other parts of society.

The notion of civil society was 'reinvented' more or less simultaneously in the 1970s and 1980s, by East European dissidents on the one hand and by social movement activists fighting authoritarian regimes in Latin America on the other. This was civil society as popular mobilisation against an authoritarian state. For neoliberals, however, civil society became important in the endeavour to minimise state power. This was very far from the often radical political activism associated with the earlier notion of civil society. The neoliberal perspective on civil society highlighted the role of depoliticised service-providing NGOs as a replacement for the state. Hence, the notion of civil society is embraced by people from different ideological positions; and, as an analytical concept, civil society is used by researchers coming from very different theoretical perspectives.

For the purposes of this book, civil society is best understood in generic terms as political space. It is a collectively organised but informal political sphere of society in which non-state actors seek to influence politics from outside political parties. It can be analytically distinguished from the state, party politics and the market economy; but in practice, boundaries between the different social spheres tend to be blurred. Civil society is closely linked to and dependent on the state and the market economy. Groups of people that act in civil society can be more or less institutionalised. They include diffuse social movements and activist networks as well as actors with a more

formalised organisational structure, such as NGOs, labour unions, business associations and religious groups (Kalm & Uhlin 2015). We use the term CSO as a generic one capturing different kinds of civil society actors, whereas NGOs are understood as a specific form of CSO. Critical NGO-research views civil society actors as driven not only by principled ideas and normative values, but also as actors driven by instrumental concerns. NGOs tend to compete for scarce resources, and hence in some respects they act in a way that resembles profit-seeking companies (Cooley & Ron 2002; Bob 2005; Prakash & Gugerty [eds] 2010). In line with this literature, we acknowledge the possibility that CSOs may act based on both normative values and instrumental interests. The precise mix of drivers of civil society activities is a question for empirical research. Hence, our approach to civil society is eclectic in incorporating elements from radical as well as liberal theorising. We understand civil society as a sphere of society, closely linked to other social spheres. It includes social movement activists as well as service-providing NGOs, grassroots networks as well as professional associations. Importantly, we do not assume that civil society actors share certain normative values. Rather, we expect civil society to be a site of conflicting norms and power struggles – as well as one of cooperation.

Academic books on civil society in Southeast Asia as a region have so far consisted either of general country overviews (Alagappa 2004; Okagawa 2018) or have been issue-specific collections (Ford [ed.] 2012). Civil society in Cambodia has been extensively studied in terms of its evolving role for democratisation, since its re-emergence in the 1990s (Bandyopadhyay & Khus 2013; Ou & Kim 2013; Öjendal 2013). Local-level civil society and its role in decentralisation has been given particular attention (Ou 2013). The basis and drivers of civil society activity and the contested and socially-constructed nature of civil society in Cambodia have been examined in the volume edited by Waibel, Ehlert & Feuer (2013). Critical scholarship has explored the embeddedness of NGOs in neopatrimonial networks (Frewer 2013), and the operation of CSOs under donor-defined, neoliberal conditions (Norman 2014). Civil society in Indonesia has also been studied in relation to the development of democracy. Uhlin (1997) and Aspinall (2005) examine the role of civil society actors in the struggle for democracy under the authoritarian Suharto regime. Hadiwinata (2003) analyses how Indonesian NGOs survived under this regime and how they contributed to the promotion of democracy in the post-Suharto era. Nyman (2006) explores the role of civil society in

the Indonesian transition from authoritarian rule. Indonesia's post-Suharto democracy movement is analysed by Prasetyo, Priyono & Törnquist (2003). Beittinger-Lee (2009) looks at the dark side of Indonesian civil society. Hefner (2011) analyses the role of Islamically-based CSOs in Indonesian democracy. Törnquist (2013) explores the institutional political setting of CSOs that can exercise 'transformative politics'. A volume edited by Savirani & Törnquist (2015) studies grassroots civil society attempts to 'reclaim' the state through prominent civil society figures. Others have focused on civil society dynamics in relation to specific issues such as labour migration (Yadiz 2013), transitional justice (Wahyuningroem 2018) and LGBT, labour, anti-corruption, youth and agrarian movements, etc. (Dibley & Ford [eds] 2019). We draw on and seek to contribute to this scholarship. However, previous research on civil society in Indonesia and Cambodia has not explored the phenomenon of civil society elites and this is where we aim to make an original contribution.

It is increasingly recognised that boundaries between civil society and the state are fuzzy. Recent theory-building in this regard is based on Southeast Asian examples. The state structures political space, thereby enabling and disenabling the articulation of different conflicts and issues across post-authoritarian and hybrid political orders in Southeast Asia (Jayasuriya & Rodan 2007; Rodan 2018). Across the region, states establish channels for public contributions, a model perfected in Singapore, where public participation centres on constructive feedback to the state (Chua 2002: 203–12; Rodan 1997; Koh & Ling 2000). Citizens may engage in various extraparliamentary modes of participation inside and outside the state, suggesting that there is a continuum between state-sponsored participation and autonomous civil society activity (Jayasuriya & Rodan 2007; Rodan 2018).

Moreover, activists may opt in and out of participation not only in civil society and state-sponsored spaces (whether extra-electoral or institutional), but also in that of electoral politics. According to Weiss (2017), these are parallel modes of engagement whose relative attraction depends on the extent and quality of political space; the collective identity behind and claims of a movement or set of actors; and likely feedback from extant elites. Greater political space for electoral than informal engagement may prompt civil society activists to enter formal politics 'as a speedier and more efficacious way of engagement' (Weiss 2015: 143). Following democratic openings, which enabled a new role for civil society figures, many civil society activists crossed to government in the Philippines (Lewis 2008a) and Indonesia (Mietzner

2013; Haryanto 2020); whilst in Bangladesh, boundary crossing from the state to NGOs occurred (Lewis 2008a). In contrast, in Cambodia civil society activists have sought to bridge political polarisation by crossing to electoral politics, so as to represent a technocratic alternative (Norén-Nilsson 2019). Boundary-crossing to formal politics does not take place in a vacuum. A study of individuals who had operated in both the state and civil society sectors in Bangladesh, the Philippines and the UK showed that 'non-governmental actors and government/public sector agencies are linked via personal relationships, resource flows and informal transactions', links which 'may include kinship relations within elite families, age-sets or alumni groups, the social embeddedness of employees within wider communities, and public or private funding streams that create ambiguous roles, allegiances and identities among "non-governmental" actors' (Lewis 2008a: 126).

This book seeks to significantly further our understanding of the relationship between engagement in civil society, economic society, the state and electoral politics, through in-depth empirical studies of the boundaries between civil society and other fields and their relative permeability from an elite studies perspective. We overcome the divide between taking either the perspective of the state's structuring of political space (Jayasuriya & Rodan 2007), or that of how activists navigate across that space (Weiss 2017), through applying a field theoretical approach which situates actors' perceptions of possible and desirable position-takings within the structure of a particular field.

Furthermore, we assume that the funding of CSOs will have implications for processes of elitisation. Foreign funding has been found to strengthen existing inequalities between different parts of civil society. Donors tend to channel aid through intermediary organisations instead of directly funding local CSOs (Van Rooy & Robinson 1998: 62). Well-connected civil society actors with easy access to funding bodies and capacity to manage foreign grants, or who already have close ties to the funders and are 'structurally embedded', receive the funding. Other CSOs come to be 'structurally excluded' (Rumbul 2013). Moreover, donor priorities tend to favour formal NGOs rather than less institutionalised popular movements and community groups. This has contributed to an 'NGOisation' of local civil societies (Uhlin 2006: 56–61), a process that can be understood as part of neoliberal politics (Irvine 2018: 733). Studies from across the world of foreign funding of NGOs are strikingly similar concerning the consequences for civil society. Chahim &

Prakash (2014) note that foreign funding has created a division between a 'modern' professional NGO sector and 'traditional' membership-based grassroots organisations in Nicaragua. In the case of Cambodia, one of the most aid-dependent countries in Asia, donors have tended to prioritise highly professional NGOs rather than groups with local community ties (Suárez & Gugerty 2016). The homogenisation of NGOs is an outcome of donor preferences for certain NGO characteristics (Kamstra & Schulpen 2015). Observations from Nicaragua, Ghana, Indonesia and Cambodia indicate that foreign funding has made aid-receiving CSOs accountable to the donors rather than the communities they claim to represent (Dosch 2012; Chahim & Prakash 2014; Kamstra & Schulpen 2015: 332; Khieng & Dahles 2015). Aid dependence has been argued to constrain CSO opposition to elite-promoted pro-market developmental strategies, and to turn CSOs into technical implementation mechanisms of donor agendas operating in neoliberal spaces (Rodan & Hughes 2012; Norman 2014).

Despite the recognition of the role of foreign funding in creating and exacerbating inequalities in civil society, extant research has not analysed the implications of foreign funding for the formation of civil society elites in any systematic way. A small body of research addresses the issue, but does not use the analytical lens of elite theory. Kamstra & Schulpen (2015: 344) argue that foreign-funded NGOs tend to be 'dominated by an (often) internationally educated academic elite' who speak a 'donor language' that is hardly understood by ordinary people. In Accra as well as Jakarta, this is 'a quite homogenous group of local elites who know each other very well' (Kamstra & Schulpen 2015: 345). Studies from across Russia find that foreign funding has served to establish a new elite of civic activists (Henderson 2002: 157).

We explore the consequences of foreign funding in relation to the formation of civil society elites, shifting the perspective from a restricted focus on professional NGOs (as discussed by Henderson 2002; Kamstra & Schulpen 2015) to include other forms of organisation as well, including platforms and networks. Processes within these organisations do not necessarily follow the same trajectories as those of professional NGOs.

Moreover, the withdrawal of foreign funding can, like the granting of funding, be expected to influence processes of elitisation. Many countries have experienced a reduction in aid in recent years, which has severe consequences for aid-dependent CSOs (Pallas 2016; Appe & Pallas 2018). Fluctuations in funding depending on changing donor priorities has been shown to have had

a significant impact on NGOs in Southeast Asia (Parks 2008). It has been suggested that recipient CSOs can respond to shifts in donor funding through exit, voice, loyalty and adjustment (Abou-Assi 2012). Loyalty and adjustment are the responses that might secure continued funding and are thus the most frequently-occurring strategies, implying a considerable donor impact on recipient CSOs' activities and broader civil society developments in aid-dependent countries. We posit that another consequence of the withdrawal of funding is the emergence of new sets of elite activists, who may have very different characteristics from the documented homogenous, donor language-speaking elites.

In sum, we conceptualise civil society as a collectively organised but informal political sphere of society in which non-state actors seek to influence politics from outside political parties. We move beyond an exclusive focus on formal NGOs to include other organisational forms too, such as movements, platforms and networks. We expect civil society to be a site of conflicting norms and power struggles. Acknowledging the blurred boundaries between civil society and other social spheres, we explore the relationship between engagement in civil society, economic society, the state and electoral politics. We expect foreign funding of CSOs, and the withdrawal of such funding, to have implications for processes of elitisation in local civil societies.

Elite Research

Political elites have been defined as consisting of 'individuals and small, relatively cohesive, and stable groups with disproportionate power to affect national and supranational political outcomes on a continuing basis' (Best & Higley 2017: 3). While focusing on *political* elites and on the political influence that they have, this conceptualisation explicitly includes not only political, but also business, military and civil society leaders. In relation to civil society, the authors mention major interest organisations, professional associations, trade unions, religious institutions, and social movements (ibid.). Despite this relatively broad and inclusive understanding of political elites, none of the 40 chapters in the influential 'Handbook of Political Elites' from which this conceptualisation is taken contains any systematic analysis of civil society actors as part of political elites. This underscores that civil society is a neglected sphere in mainstream elite research.

Elite theory suggests that a minority of individuals holds most power in society. Classic elite theory identifies elites as an inevitable aspect of social

life and emphasises the personal qualities and superiority of members of the elite (Korom, 2015). Michels (1962) proposes that the resources and power of elites are institutionally or organisationally embedded and defines elites as consisting of those who have key positions in powerful organisations. Mills' (1956) notion of 'the power elite' also focuses on similar social origin, common social and political interests and shared social networks of elite members.

There are two major approaches to the identification of elites (Khan 2012: 362). Either members of the elite are defined by the power and resources they possess (following Weber) or they are identified as those holding a dominant position within social relations (following Marx). It is this latter, relational approach that we apply in this book. More specifically, in Chapter 2 we develop an analytical framework based on Bourdieu's concept of the 'field'. From this perspective, members of the elite are actors who hold dominant positions in a field shaped by the ways in which different forms of capital are valued and dispersed. The term elite, then, has no normative connotation per se.

Elites in Indonesia have received some scholarly attention. Ford and Pepinsky (eds) (2014) explore oligarchy, inequality and power in contemporary Indonesia. While some contributions to this edited volume do address issues related to civil society, they conceptualise civil society as a counter-force to the elite and do not consider the possibility of civil society elites. Similarly, Lussier (2016) focuses on how political participation can constrain elites, but the possible emergence of an elite within civil society is not explored. Elite research in the Cambodian context has focused on political elites. Strangio (2014) analyses Cambodian society under PM Hun Sen's leadership, offering a portrait of elite political culture. Norén-Nilsson (2016) examines the nationalistic imaginings of political party elites, tracing out a tension between domestic elite imaginings and the formally liberal democratic framework in which they operate. None of these studies, however, applies the elite focus to civil society.

The relative neglect of civil society in elite research is not limited to Cambodia and Indonesia. Although elite research has investigated different elite types (including those in business, politics, administration, religion and culture) in a wide range of countries, there are very few studies focusing on elites within civil society. One example of a study that refers to a civil society elite is an ethnographic study of NGOs in Nicaragua. Based on extensive fieldwork, Mattsson (2007: 37) suggests that 'NGO actors constitute an emerging local elite that has substantial economic and ideological power'. Another example is a quantitative study of civil society in China. Ma & DeDeo (2017) find that

Chinese civil society organisations have a high degree of board interlocking, and that in some sectors there is also a strong presence of government officials on the boards of civil society organisations. Recent research, including by some of the contributors to this book, has also identified civil society elites among Brussels-based civil society platforms related to the European Union (Lindellee & Scaramuzzino 2020); within 'think tanks' (Åberg, Einarsson & Reuter 2020; Jezierska 2020); and, most relevant for the present study, across different civil society sectors in Cambodia and Indonesia (Haryanto 2020; Lay & Eng 2020; Norén-Nilsson & Eng 2020). This book aims to open up the study of civil society elites as a new research frontier (see also Johansson & Uhlin 2020), by offering a first comprehensive and in-depth study of elite formation and interaction, in the context of Cambodian and Indonesian civil societies.

A major theme in elite research is the *formation and reproduction of elites*. Social institutions such as families, schools and clubs are important for the reproduction of elites (Khan 2012: 371). Through such social institutions, new members of the elite are socialised into the elite role. Elites are not static: new individuals emerge as members of elites, a phenomenon that is described as 'elite circulation'. The phenomenon of elite circulation was noted by the classic elite theorists. Pareto (1935: 1419) argued that 'in modern civilised countries circulation among the various classes is exceedingly rapid'. The theme of elite circulation has been taken up by contemporary researchers. Verzichelli (2017) reviews research focusing on both change and continuity within political elites. Mangset (2017) analyses elite circulation, knowledge and education based on qualitative interviews with elite members in the UK, France and Norway.

Besides analysing elite socialisation, for example through the educational system, research on elite formation and reproduction has focused on more specific procedures for appointment, recruitment, and training within different organisations (Mangset, Maxwell & van Zanten 2017). A new process of elite selection, or the 'changing nature of *elite selectorates*', in which linkages to civil society actors may play an important role, has been suggested as an area for future research on elite circulation (Verzichelli 2017: 587). In line with this research, we analyse the formation of civil society elites by exploring how new civil society leaders are recruited and socialised into becoming elite activists within selected CSOs in Cambodia and Indonesia.

We assume that foreign funding may play a role in such processes. Important aspects of foreign funding to CSOs, according to Irvine (2018), are capacity building and the formation of alliances. Such initiatives are likely to have direct

effects on elite formation within civil society. The capacity-building aim is often directed at strengthening leadership within the recipient organisations, hence supporting an elite position for certain individuals. Moreover, the goal of forming alliances may also contribute to the elite status of those individual civil society activists who benefit from central positions in influential social networks resulting from foreign-funded projects. We explore such possible implications of foreign funding to CSOs using a relational field approach to the formation of civil society elites.

Another major focus in elite research is the *interaction and integration of elites*. The integration of elites has been conceptualised as elite cohesion (Hoffmann-Lange 2017: 55). There are two main aspects of elite integration: value consensus and network of interactions (Hoffmann-Lange 2017: 56). Hence, elite integration can be said to have two distinct meanings (Engelstad 2017: 441): members of the elite group have shared 'orientations, attitudes, and social views'; and members of the elite group are interdependent. In line with our relational approach, we focus on the dimension of interaction.

Three forms of elite integration can be identified (Engelstad 2017: 439–440): integration across elite groups, integration within a particular elite group, and integration between elites and non-elites. We focus on the first of these forms: integration across elite groups, i.e. the interaction between civil society elite actors and other elite groups, as manifested in boundary crossing activities.

Most studies of elite interaction and integration are quantitative. They tend to rely either on surveys (e.g. Higley et al. 1991; Cornwell & Dokshin 2014; Edling, Farkas & Rydgren 2015) or on datasets based on available data on formal positions in organisations (e.g. Moore et al. 2002; Bühlman, David & Mach 2012; Larsen & Ellersgaard 2017; Ma & DeDeo 2017). Research on elite integration has also focused on 'interlocks' (e.g. Mizruchi 1996; Moore et al. 2002; Ma & DeDeo 2017). 'An interlocking directorate occurs when a person affiliated with one organisation sits on the board of directors of another organisation' (Mizruchi 1996: 271). Moore et al. (2002) examined patterns of overlap and interaction between government, corporate, and civil society elites in the US and found substantial linkages. While these quantitative studies of elite interaction and integration have provided very valuable comparative overviews across countries, there are limitations associated with the survey data and biographical datasets used. These quantitative studies fail to capture more fine-grained power dynamics related to elite interaction as experienced by individual elite actors. To get a more in-depth understanding

of the perceptions of elite individuals within civil society who interact with elite individuals of other types, we draw heavily on qualitative interviews. This methodological approach is elaborated in Chapter 2.

In this book, one of the dimensions of elite interaction and integration that interests us is the phenomenon of boundary crossing. This refers to the movement of elite actors between civil society and other societal spheres. Taking Lewis' (2008a; 2008b; 2012) studies of boundary crossers as a point of departure, we track individual civil society leaders' career paths, which may involve employment by the state and in political and/or economic society as well as in civil society. Lewis' studies from the Philippines, Bangladesh and the UK suggest that there is considerable interaction and circulation, if not integration, between individuals in leading positions within civil society and in the public sector.

Summing up, we use analytical tools from elite studies in order to highlight power structures and processes within and beyond civil society. Our approach is relational and we focus on relationships of conflict and cooperation that provide certain people with status and help them reach formal and informal leadership positions. This means that we seek inspiration in research on elite formation and reproduction. We are also interested in the interaction between civil society elites and elites in other social spheres, such as politics and business, and what implications this has for the reproduction of civil society elites. Hence, we also draw on research on elite interaction and integration. One particular dimension of elite interaction is the movement of elite individuals between civil society and other social spheres. We pay special attention to the experiences of these boundary crossers and what such experiences can tell us about what resources are valued in different fields.

Conceptualising Civil Society Elites

This book is primarily concerned with *processes* of elite formation and interaction. In order to understand these processes we need to conceptualise what we mean by a 'civil society elite' and clarify how we are distinguishing elites from non-elites. Following a relational approach to the identification of elites (Khan 2012: 362), we understand these to consist of those who hold dominant positions within social relations. In Chapter 2 we develop an analytical framework based on Bourdieu's concept of the field. Bourdieu conceptualises elites in relation to the power they have over others, and argues that actors engage in a constant struggle to gain relative control over resources they consider

essential. Elites are hence made up of actors who hold dominant positions (over subordinate positions) in a field shaped by how social, economic, cultural, and/or symbolic capital is valued and dispersed among actors (Swartz 1997).

Another way of formulating this is that those holding dominant positions – elite actors – have significant influence over other actors. Civil society elite actors could, thus, be understood as 'those at the top of civil society and hence in positions to exercise substantial influence over other civil society actors, the issue areas they are engaged in or even over societal developments' (Johansson & Uhlin 2020: 82). From this perspective, one way of identifying members of elites is to investigate the power and influence actors have over other actors. In the context of a civil society elite, this might refer to having a dominant position and significant influence within a civil society sector or issue area, within civil society as a whole, or in society more broadly. Whereas individuals who have such positions in the first two contexts are elite actors within civil society, individuals who have positions in society more broadly are elite actors beyond civil society.

In line with relational approaches in elite research we understand 'civil society elites' as consisting of individuals holding dominant field positions. The field may be issue area specific (a human rights field, an agricultural field, etc.), but it may also refer to civil society at large. Moreover, we also consider positions in an overarching 'field of power'. However, we do not analyse leaders who are influential only within their own organisations. To be a civil society elite actor, an individual must have an impact beyond his or her own organisations. Elite status may be linked to formal leadership positions in an organisation, but this is not always the case. Holding a leading position in a CSO is not sufficient to mean that an individual is a member of a civil society elite. Not all CSO leaders are elite actors, and civil society elite actors do not necessarily have to hold formal leadership positions in an organisation. Who belongs to the elite must be contextually determined, based on an analysis of power relations in the field in question.

Outline of the Book

The book as a whole argues that an analytical focus on civil society elites reveals power dynamics not only within civil society but also in the interactions between civil society and other social spheres. Certain individuals reach leading positions within civil society by mobilizing resources, which

they use, gain and lose when they interact with the state and within political and economic fields. Civil society leaders can transform their roles and move between the fields of the state, politics and economics, demonstrating that the boundaries between these fields are porous. These processes of civil society elite formation and interaction occur in both Indonesia and Cambodia, but vary depending on the trajectories of civil society development in post-authoritarian and increasingly authoritarian contexts respectively.

The book is based on extensive fieldwork in Cambodia and Indonesia. It draws on case studies of civil society organisations and networks in different fields. The chapters of the book are not limited to one CSO case each. Instead, chapters are thematic, focusing on specific analytical aspects of the formation and interactions of civil society elites, and they include data from several CSO cases in order to allow for comparative analysis across CSOs, civil society sectors and countries.

Following this introduction, the book is divided into three main parts and a concluding chapter. Part 1 sets the scene for the case studies that follow, by developing an analytical framework based in field theory and by elaborating our research design and methods based on thorough fieldwork (Chapter 2). It also provides rich contextualisations of the two countries on which we are focusing, in chapters on civil society in Cambodia (Chapter 3) and Indonesia (Chapter 4). Part 2 focuses on elite formation in civil society. Chapter 5 offers a comparative analysis of elite reproduction within Cambodian and Indonesian youth organisations. Chapter 6 explores leadership and power in Cambodian forest conservation networks. Chapter 7 examines how development aid has affected the (re)production of elites in Indonesian human rights and anti-corruption CSOs. Taken together, these chapters offer innovative analytical perspectives and unique new data on how elites are formed and reproduced within key civil society sectors in Cambodia and Indonesia. Part 3 highlights processes of elite interaction and integration. Chapter 8 examines the interaction between state and civil society elites on the local level in Indonesia. Chapter 9 zooms in on the agricultural sector in Cambodia and explores the interaction between state, business, and civil society elites. Chapter 10 provides a comparative analysis of boundary crossers, i.e. elite actors who have moved between civil society and other social spheres. Together, the three chapters in this part of the book make innovative contributions on interactions between state and civil society and further develop research on boundary crossers, thus shedding new light on field dynamics pertaining to civil society, the state, political and economic

society. Finally, the concluding chapter (Chapter 11) revisits the main findings of the contributions to the book, spells out the comparative perspectives across the two countries and different civil society sectors, and discusses the research and policy implications of our findings.

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PART 1

SETTING THE SCENE: THEORY, METHODS AND CONTEXT

CHAPTER 2

Field Theory and Methods for the Analysis of Civil Society Elites

Anders Uhlin
Astrid Norén-Nilsson
Amalinda Savirani

This chapter develops our more specific theoretical and methodological starting points. We first discuss field theory as developed by Bourdieu, and specify how we use some key concepts as 'thinking tools' when entering our fields. We then turn to how we operationalise the field framework and present our research design and methodological approach. Our approach relies on extensive fieldwork in Cambodia and Indonesia, and hence it refers to 'field studies' in terms of both theory and methods. We discuss our case selection, including the reasons for choosing the two country case studies as well as the more specific civil society sectors and actors on which we focus. We then elaborate on our fieldwork-oriented research design in relation to two kinds of studies: the formation and reproduction of civil society elites and the interaction of civil society elites. The chapter ends with some reflections on research ethics, before summing up our methodological approach.

Field Theory

Much social theory tends to conceive of the social world as consisting primarily of substances and static 'things'. An alternative, relational, approach, by contrast, understands social reality in 'dynamic, continuous and processual terms' (Emirbayer 1997: 281). Field theory provides a relational approach that has proved useful both in studies of elites (Kahn 2012) and of civil society (Barman 2016), but it has so far not been applied to the study of civil society elites. A field theoretical approach is in line with recent calls for elite research

to take new directions by uncovering the social composition of power elites, reconstructing processes through which people gain access to positions, examining the various forms of capital they mobilise, and probing changes over time and variations across national and transnational contexts (Korsnes et al. [eds] 2017). We agree that the work of Bourdieu is the 'richest terrain' to develop the elite research field, if amended to generate a greater attentiveness to certain issues, including the relationship between elites and power and that between capitalism, gender and race (Cousin, Khan and Mears 2018). Here we review some important aspects of Bourdieu's field theory, including the related concepts of capital and habitus. The aim is to develop an analytical framework with some key 'thinking tools' that can guide our studies of the formation and interaction of civil society elites.

Different versions of field theory have already been applied in research on civil society in general – not focusing specifically on civil society elites. Barman (2016) identifies three distinct, but interrelated, field approaches in research into the 'non-profit sector'. Firstly, there is Bourdieu's field theory. Secondly, there is New Institutionalism (DiMaggio & Powell 1983), which focuses on 'organizational fields' that may include civil society as well as state and business actors. Thirdly, there is the Strategic Action Fields (SAFs) approach (Fligstein & McAdam 2011, 2012), which combines social movement theory and organisational theory to account for collective action. While New Institutionalism is particularly useful for understanding formal civil society organisations and SAF theory provides a framework for analysing less institutionalised civil society actors such as social movements and grassroots groups, the original Bourdieusian approach should be well-suited for the study of all kinds of civil society elites (cf Barman 2016: 452).

Bourdieu on Field, Capital and Habitus

Bourdieu's field theory (Bourdieu 1993; 1996; see also Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992) has inspired studies of business and political elites (Kahn 2012). Fields, according to Bourdieu (1993: 72), are 'structured spaces of positions (or posts) whose properties depend on their position within these spaces and which can be analysed independently of the characteristics of their occupants (which are partly determined by them)'. This means that an analysis of interactions is not sufficient; it is also necessary to analyse the underlying structures, that is the distribution of power that is constitutive of the structure of the field

(Emirbayer & Johnson 2008: 8–10). Crucially, the exact boundaries of a field cannot be determined prior to empirical research. The boundaries of the field extend as far as the power relations that constitute the field. Analysing these power relations is a major focus of empirical research (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992: 100; Emirbayer & Johnson 2008: 7, 24). Field theory can be applied in the analysis of relations between clusters of CSOs, but also in analysing the 'social configurations in which organisational fields are themselves embedded' (Emirbayer & Johnson 2008: 3). Moreover, individual CSOs can also be conceptualised as fields (ibid.). We can, for instance, think of the CSO Indonesian Forum for Environment (WALHI) as a field of its own, but also as part of the field of the environmental sector of Indonesian civil society, which in turn is part of an Indonesian civil society field. We might also conceive of transnational fields. Bourdieu has rightly been accused of 'methodological nationalism', as his research has tended to view national boundaries as defining the spatial limits of fields (Savage & Silva 2013: 121). This is a limitation that should be avoided, especially in the context of international development aid and transnational civil society relations. To take the example of WALHI again, this Indonesian CSO, as a member of the Friends of the Earth International (FoEI) network, can also be seen as part of a transnational environmental civil society field.

Despite the above-mentioned limitations, Bourdieu's field approach offers a novel understanding of elites and appears particularly suitable for the development of a theory of civil society elites, as it stresses forms of cooperation, competition and conflict between civil society actors and how such processes structure relations and positions. While most elite theories define elite status in terms of the resources, or attributes, to which an actor has access, a relational and field approach defines elite actors as those 'who occupy a dominant position within social relations' (Khan 2012: 362). Bourdieu conceptualises elites relative to the power their members have over others, and argues that actors engage in continuous struggles to gain relative control over resources they consider essential. Elites are hence made up of actors who hold dominant positions (over subordinate positions) in a field shaped by how social, economic, cultural and/or symbolic capital is valued and dispersed among actors (Swartz 1997).

Bourdieu (1996) identifies three main forms of capital: economic capital (money, property etc.), cultural capital (knowledge, taste, symbolic codes, etc.), and social capital (affiliations and networks). He also elaborates on symbolic capital, which stands for all the other kinds of capital and can be

exchanged in other fields (Thomson 2012: 67). Others have identified additional types of capital, such as knowledge capital and political capital (Khan 2012). The chapters in this book refer to several of these forms of capital as appropriate in specific contexts. Control of these forms of capital enables the exercise of power, and thus identifying where such control lies and operates helps us define the field. At the same time, 'to construct the forms of specific capital one must know the specific logic of the field' (Emirbayer & Johnson 2008: 11). Capital is fundamentally relational. 'The very value of economic or social capital is constituted by its past and present uses, by the structure of the field(s) in which it is deployed, and by its specific differences vis-à-vis other forms of capital.' (Emirbayer & Johnson 2008: 3)

This approach to elites thus stresses that elite status, standing and authority are relative notions, as they depend on the value and composition of capital in the field, and how such capital is linked to other forms of capital in other fields. Resources need to be convertible into other forms of capital in order to be useful across fields (Khan 2012: 362). This raises the interesting question of the 'exchange rate' of different forms of capital (Bourdieu 1996: 265).

In addition to the concepts of field and capital, habitus is a third major concept used by Bourdieu. Habitus refers to 'the relatively durable principles of judgement and practice generated by an actor's early life-experiences and modified (to a greater or lesser degree) later in life' (Emirbayer & Johnson 2008: 4). Hence, habitus 'links past fields to present fields through the individual actors who move from one to the next' (ibid.). One might also speak of 'organizational habitus' (ibid.: 19). If the objective structures of the field refer to the 'the game itself', habitus refers to 'the feel for the game' (Savage & Silva 2013: 113). It is the habitus that determines an actor's perception of possible and desirable position-takings within a field, and an actor's power to enforce his/her position-taking on others depends on the volume, form and value of his/her capital, that is his/her position in the field (Emirbayer & Johnson 2008: 28). In a concise formulation, 'one's practice results from relations between one's dispositions (habitus) and one's position in a field (capital), within the current state of play of that social arena (field)' (Maton 2012: 50).

We suggest that Bourdieu's concepts of field, capital and habitus, as discussed above, can constitute important analytical tools in research on the formation and interaction of civil society elites. In particular, we highlight the following points: (1) elite status is about social relations within a field; (2) there may be multiple, partly overlapping, fields; (3) relations within a field

are characterised by competition as well as cooperation; (4) an important focus in the analysis is on how different forms of capital are used and gained in elite interaction; and (5) habitus, understood as a set of dispositions based on previous field experiences, determines an actor's perception of possible and desirable position-takings within a field.

Our Approach

In line with Bourdieu, we understand 'civil society elites' as consisting of actors holding dominant positions within a field specific to an issue area; within civil society at large; or even within an overarching 'field of power'. While we find inspiration in Bourdieu's theorising of field, capital and habitus, we do not aim to do justice to all the complexities of these theoretical constructs. Rather, we use some of the concepts that he developed as 'thinking tools', where we find them useful in our empirical analyses. Whereas all contributions to this book are inspired by this framework as a whole, each chapter selects certain aspects of the framework as entry-points for the analysis. Some chapters complement the Bourdieu-inspired analysis with insights from the SAF theory developed by Fligstein & McAdam (2011, 2012). SAF theory is very much in line with, and explicitly draws on, Bourdieu's field theory. However, there are some important differences. Whereas Bourdieu is mainly concerned with the structure of the field and the positions of individuals, SAF theory focuses on the strategic actions of collective actors. SAF theory provides a framework that enables us to also analyse elite groups as collective actors; and it allows for a more dynamic, agency-oriented, analysis, something that has the potential to be a useful complement to Bourdieu's more structural theory. Moreover, SAF theory stresses that there is a complex web of SAFs. Each SAF may be part of a larger SAF, somewhat like Russian dolls (Fligstein & McAdam 2011: 3). SAFs may overlap and their boundaries are not fixed (ibid.: 4). This is a perspective that is very much in line with our research interest in how civil society elites interact with other elite groups and how elite members move between fields. While we conceptualise civil society as one large field (in Bourdieusian terms), we will also identify several subfields (or SAFs), for instance in relation to particular civil society sectors such as human rights, agriculture, youth, etc.

There are two additional aspects of civil society elites that we find vital in understanding these elites in Cambodia and Indonesia, but which are not

commonly highlighted in Bourdieu- and SAF-inspired studies. We argue that our case studies must also be analysed through the lenses of gender and age differences. We know from previous research that civil society activities tend to be fundamentally gendered, with certain sectors being predominantly female whereas others are predominantly male (Howell & Mulligan [eds] 2005; Howell 2007; Seckinelgin 2010). General elite studies have highlighted the gendered reproduction of elites (Glucksberg 2018; Toft & Flemmen 2018). Processes of elite formation and interaction must be understood as gendered processes. Moreover, we are interested in generational differences and to what extent processes of elite formation are biased in favour of older people. Age is a particularly important variable in the Cambodian and Indonesian contexts, with demographic patterns that include very large numbers of young people. Hence, questions of gender and age are important aspects of our field-theoretical approach. In the remaining part of this chapter, we outline how these analytical points of departure are operationalised in our specific research design and methods.

Research Design and Methods

Case Selection

Cambodia and Indonesia provide contrasting trajectories in terms of civil society development. Following the UN-led transition to formal democracy in the 1990s and substantial foreign funding of NGOs, a large number of new NGOs emerged in Cambodia. The political regime has, however, become increasingly repressive and political space for independent civil society activities has been severely restricted (see Chapter 3). Indonesia has moved in the other direction, with dramatically expanding political space for civil society following the breakdown of the authoritarian Suharto regime in 1998. Although the relatively expanding space for civil society in Indonesia is now under threat due to democratic regression during in recent years (see Chapter 4), the differences between the two countries remain significant. These different trajectories are likely to result in different types of elite formation in civil society.

In our selection of civil society sectors and actors we aim at a broad diversity. In both countries, we focus on civil society organisations and networks active at both local and national levels. Our cases include progressive and radical critics of the government as well as actors closely linked to, and even co-opted by, the state. We include civil society sectors exposed to substantial foreign aid as well as civil society organisations and networks that rely less

heavily on foreign funding, as we assume that reliance on foreign funding may be an important factor influencing the character of civil society elite formation. Most of our cases include relatively formalised organisations, but we also cover more informal network forms of mobilisation. It should be stressed that when investigating formal organisations we also looked beyond formal organisational structures. As Garsten & Nyqvist (2013: 12) put it, '[f]ormal organisations house a great deal of informal social interaction'.

As stated by George & Bennett (2005: 30), '[c]ase researchers do *not* aspire to select cases that are directly "representative" of diverse populations'. There is indeed no way to identify the complete population of the phenomenon we intend to study: elite formation and interaction in and beyond civil society. What we have done is design a set of in-depth case studies reflecting different political and socio-economic contexts and with varying degrees of foreign funding.

The Cambodian case studies are drawn from the subfields of agriculture; youth; and natural resources and environment. In each of the subfields, we study two organisations, networks and platforms in detail. For agriculture, we study Amru Rice, a rice-exporting social enterprise that has created a farmer association to support farmers who have signed up to its contract farming scheme in Cambodia's Northern provinces; and the Cambodian Centre for Study and Development in Agriculture (CEDAC), a network-based farmers' organisation that operates in 22 Cambodian provinces. For the subfield of youth, we focus on Perspectives Cambodia, a state-sponsored debate and public speaking platform in Phnom Penh, and *Politikoffee*, a Phnom Penh-based discussion platform on social and political issues. Our case studies for the subfield of natural resources and environment are the Monks Community Forest (MCF), a monk-led forest conservation effort in North Western Otdar Meanchey province on the Cambodian-Thai border; and the Prey Lang Community Network (PLCN), a forest conservation network spanning the four provinces of Kampong Thom, Kratie, Stung Treng, and Preah Vihear in northern Cambodia. The cases differ in their degree of reliance on foreign funding, and in the level of closeness in their relationship with the state. They represent different organisational forms, including network- and platform-based initiatives – which are, we argue, becoming increasingly important in Cambodian civil society. They also house boundary crossers who move between civil society and other fields.

In Indonesia, we select four subfields, namely agrarian/agriculture; youth; human rights; and governance (anti-corruption). Within each subfield, we

focus on two CSOs. Our selection includes CSOs operating at both local and national levels and with varying degrees of foreign funding. In the agrarian subfield, we select *Ininnawa* Community of Makassar, South Sulawesi; and the Consortium for Agrarian Reform (KPA – *Konsorsium Pembaharuan Agraria*). While KPA works more in land rights, peasant organisation and agrarian reform in general, *Ininnawa* focuses more on strengthening the village economy by organising local farmers in some villages around South Sulawesi to solve problems collectively, and by introducing more sustainability through organic farming. In the youth sector, we (again) include *Ininnawa* as it is established and run by young people, and *Ketjilbergerak* ('Small but Moving') in Yogyakarta. In relation to human rights, we focus on the locally-based CSO Empowerment and Development Advocacy (*Bengkel APPeK – Advokasi Pemberdayaan dan Pengembangan Kampung*) in Kupang, in the eastern part of Indonesia, which focuses on social rights; and the Indonesian Legal Aid Foundation (YLBHI – *Yayasan Lembaga Bantuan Hukum Indonesia*) and the Jakarta Legal Aid Institute (LBH Jakarta – *Lembaga Bantuan Hukum*). In the subfield of governance, we select the Indonesian Forum for Budget Transparency (FITRA – *Forum Indonesia untuk Transparansi Anggaran*); and Indonesian Corruption Watch (ICW).

The focus on specific CSOs does not mean that we limit our analysis to these organisations. As per our field analytical framework, civil society elites can only be analysed in terms of positions in a field. This means that while we take a biographical approach and are interested in the life histories of key individuals, our chapters are organised around certain organisations as points of departure for uncovering dynamics in their respective fields. We use the CSOs as entry-points to the larger civil society sector in which they operate, and indeed the whole civil society field – and, when focusing on boundary crossers, related state, economic and electoral fields. While cases in Cambodia and Indonesia are selected in order to display some similarities (in terms of a focus on the youth and agricultural sectors), the intention is not to hold certain factors constant in a systematic way. Instead, each case is intended to shed light on different types of elitisation processes. Hence, our main focus is on within-case analysis, but we combine this with comparative analysis across cases. We agree with George & Bennett (2005: 179) that '[t]he results of individual case studies, each of which employs within-case analysis, can be compared by drawing them together within a common theoretical framework without having to find two or more cases that are similar in every respect

but one.' Chapters are thematic, focusing on specific analytical aspects of the formation and interaction of civil society elites, and they include data from several CSO cases in order to allow for comparative analysis across CSOs, civil society sectors and countries.

Fieldwork Design

We now turn to the way in which we have operationalised the field approach developed in the beginning of this chapter. According to Bourdieu, empirical investigation of a field should include both the mapping of objective structures of relations between positions in the field and analysis of the habitus of agents in the field (Thomson 2012: 73). This suggests that we need to engage in both participant observations of interactions in a field and in qualitative interviews with actors in the field.

Our research interest in the formation of civil society elites and the interaction and possibly integration of these elites with other elites led us to design two kinds of empirical studies. First, we studied formal and informal processes of *recruitment, appointment* and *training* of new leaders within the selected civil society organisations and movements. Second, we studied the interaction between civil society leaders and members of other elite groups and interviewed boundary crossers who have moved between civil society and other social spheres.

Exploring the *formation and reproduction* of civil society elites through recruitment, appointment, and training requires in-depth and context-sensitive data. With a focus on 'social routines, cultural repertoires, and on the (self-) representation of elites' (Abbink & Salverda [eds] 2013: 3), anthropologists are able to explore important dimensions of elite formation that are difficult to capture through the conventional quantitative approaches that have dominated elite research within the fields of sociology and political science. Exploring the 'culture of elites' (Abbink & Salverda [eds] 2013: 14–15), anthropologists highlight norms, values and interests that characterise and unite elites (Shore 2002: 13). These are central aspects of elite formation and very much in line with a relational field theory that understands fields as socially constructed. As Shore (ibid.: 6) argues, 'the proper study of elite cultures is the habitus, networks and culture of elites themselves, including their informal and everyday practices and intimate spaces'. This vantage point also allows us to go beyond formal leadership positions to explore informal networks (Abbink & Salverda

[eds] 2013: 12). While we did not ourselves conduct thorough ethnographic studies, which would not have been feasible for our relatively large sample of civil society sectors and CSOs in two countries, we have nevertheless been inspired by anthropological elite research, with a particular focus on in-depth interviews to capture field-specific features.

An interest in elite formation implies a focus on how elites in civil society are produced and reproduced. We set out to capture the reproduction of norms and culture and specific individuals, as well as hierarchical structures. This can be studied in formal and informal processes of recruitment, appointment or election of new leaders as well as through studying leadership training programmes within selected CSOs (cf Mangset, Maxwell & van Zanten 2017). Foreign funding is likely to play an important role in such processes.

This requires relying on multiple data sources. Written documents on leadership recruitment procedures and training programs, where available, are analysed. Semi-structured interviews with representatives of the CSOs are key to our approach. Interviews and observations shed light on how the processes of recruitment and training work, and how they influence norms, values and the elite status of the individuals involved. We identify what logic underpins specific recruitment processes.

Funding (foreign and other) means the introduction of new economic capital into the field of civil society. This capital is not equally distributed, but tends to be concentrated in certain CSOs and also to be controlled by specific individual leaders within the aid-recipient CSOs. The introduction of new capital into the field influences positions and position-takings, providing certain actors with more power and influence in relation to other actors. This capital is the object of competition between different actors (incumbents and challengers) and it will empower those actors who manage to control it. As mentioned above, funding from donor agencies should not only be considered as economic capital. It also entails social capital, as new relations with funding agencies may offer participation in social networks that strengthen the elite position of certain CSOs and individual leaders. There may also be a clear cultural dimension of foreign funding, as it comes with certain norms, values and symbolic practices. Exploring how different forms of capital are manifested in development aid to CSOs is part of our research.

The above methodological reflections can be summarised in a fieldwork guide that we produced and followed, which also elaborates more specific

themes and questions for interviews, observations and document analysis. (See Appendix for the fieldwork guide.)

Whereas the formation and reproduction of elites mainly refers to the internal dynamics of CSOs, *interaction* and *integration* focus our attention on dynamics that are external to CSOs. A specific approach to the study of elite interaction and integration is to focus on boundary crossers. Inspired by Lewis (2008a; 2008b; 2012) we identify a number of individuals who have moved from leading positions within civil society to take up influential positions in the state, political parties or businesses. In selecting interviewees, our starting point is the civil society sectors and CSOs identified in the overarching case selection. We specifically target civil society leaders who have taken up positions within the state, political or economic fields. The interviews are life-history interviews, which provide us with narratives of boundary crossing experiences. Interviews explore personal and professional background, motivations and values, and experiences from different sectors. In analysing these interviews, complemented by written primary sources and secondary literature when available, we aim at identifying different types of boundary crossers. (See Appendix for the fieldwork guide.)

The total number of interviews conducted for this project is 110 – 50 in Cambodia and 60 in Indonesia. In addition we conducted 10 focus group discussions in Indonesia. Interviews lasted between one and two hours and were conducted by members of the project team (who are also the authors of this book). They followed the fieldwork guide referred to above (see Appendix), obviously adjusted to the specific context of each interview. All interviews were transcribed in full.

Data Analysis and some Reflections on Ethics

Data – in the form of interview transcripts, fieldwork notes, documents produced by CSOs, selected civil society leaders' CVs and other biographical data, and media reports – were coded following the analytical framework developed in this chapter. This implied identifying overarching themes and patterns (related to elite formation and boundary crossing) and applying more specific 'thinking tools' (such as habitus and different forms of capital). All data was read, reread, coded and recoded by several researchers.

The power dynamics inherent in most research relations (e.g. related to gender and age) loom particularly large for research on elites, for whom the

holding of different forms of power may be seen as a particular characteristic. It is often pointed out that the privileged position of the researcher in relation to non-elite interviewees calls for serious reflections on positionality and power relations in the interview situation (e.g. Mellor et al. 2014). Elite interviews are believed to be different in this respect, as the interviewee may be able to exercise more power than the interviewer. Nevertheless, elite individuals as well as non-elite individuals may be vulnerable in several ways. Interview quotations could be damaging for the interviewee, causing embarrassment, compromising professional relationships, and could even lead to the loss of a job (Lancaster 2017: 99). Therefore, it might make sense to speak about 'vulnerable elites' (Smith 2006: 650). In the specific case of civil society elites, some accounts linked to a specific person could have damaging effects not only for the individual, but also for the organisation (s)he represents and possibly for the whole civil society sector. This kind of sensitivity or vulnerability is particularly acute in contexts where civil society activists are challenged by states with authoritarian tendencies, or in a time of strong populist anti-elite sentiments among substantial parts of the population.

In addition to following the obvious ethical codes of conduct for good research practice, such as securing informed consent from all research participants, offering anonymity, and storing all data in a secure way, we seriously consider the potential vulnerabilities of each research participant and make individual judgements based on the contextual expertise of each author. In concrete terms, this means that we display interviewees' names only in the case of public figures who have agreed to be cited by name and who do not make statements that differ significantly from positions already publicly known or that could be damaging for themselves or others.

Depicting someone as belonging to an elite may have both positive and negative connotations and implications. Ascribing 'eliteness' to certain individual or collective actors might in itself contribute to the production of status and the maintenance of power (cf Thurlow & Jaworski 2017). Elite theorists at the end of the 19th and in first half of the 20th century emphasised the superior qualities of individuals belonging to elite groups (e.g. Pareto 1935). Within the field of sports, we still think of elite individuals as the most skilful people. However, being depicted as belonging to an elite may also invoke notions of unjust privileges and power that benefits a few at the cost of marginalising the many. Other actors may therefore find being identified as an elite stigmatising rather than empowering. This potential stigma associated with the notion of

a civil society elite requires us to be very clear that we use the notion of elite in a 'neutral' way for actors who hold dominant positions in social relations. We neither suggest that the people we identify as civil society elite actors necessarily enjoy unjust privileges, nor that they cannot represent non-elites.

Summing Up

This chapter has elaborated on the theoretical points of departure and methodological choices guiding research for this book. This research can be described as field studies, both in terms of applying the theoretical notion of field and in terms of a fieldwork-based methodological approach. We draw on Bourdieu's writing on fields, and related concepts of capital and habitus, as well as on certain insights from SAF theory. Going beyond classic field theory, we pay special attention to gender and age differentiations within the fields we examine. Our fieldwork is heavily focused on qualitative interviews with civil society leaders in different sectors (agriculture/agrarian, youth, natural resources and environment, human rights, and anti-corruption). Additional data consist of fieldwork notes, documents produced by CSOs, CVs of civil society leaders, and media reports. We are aware of the ethical problems of researching civil society elites, especially in less than democratic contexts, and, based on our contextual knowledge, we have taken a number of steps to avoid our research having any damaging impacts on any of the research participants. Our analytical approach is summarised in a detailed fieldwork guide (see Appendix).

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CHAPTER 3

Civil Society in Cambodia

Unattributed[1]

Cambodia constitutes an exemplary case illustrating some of the major development assistance trends of the post-Cold War era, and its civil society organisations can be viewed as a project of the post-Cold War liberal democracy experiment. Cambodia emerged from devastating conflict in 1998 following a United Nations peacekeeping intervention from 1991–1993, and has subsequently navigated 30 years of faltering democratisation and contested development. As this chapter will show, ideas of liberal peace and democracy have been consistently championed within Cambodia over the past three decades by a coalition of civil society organisations, opposition political parties and international donors, but have been viewed with far more suspicion by the dominant ruling party and its allies. Economic growth has been understood as a development strategy based on accumulation by dispossession, in which vast tracts of land have been enclosed and leased to foreign investors or well-connected Cambodian actors. The result has been marginalisation and harassment of activists and critics, continuous low-level violence against communities, electoral manipulation, and finally, in 2017, an outright authoritarian reversal that saw the major opposition party banned and closed political and civic space.

In connection with the state's tightening grip on the civic space, another branch of civil society closely affiliated with the government emerged. These networks differ considerably from the traditional Western-funded organisations in many ways: from sources of funding, to fields of operation, to pathways to leadership. Elite actors in economic and political fields are typically the leaders of these new networks, who, drawing on their economic and political capital, enjoy unique advantages vis-à-vis independent civil society. Meanwhile, independent civil society organisations are severely

1 The authors wish to remain anonymous.

circumscribed and have found no avenue to contest the sharp retreat back to authoritarian rule.

This chapter analyses the evolution of contemporary Cambodian civil society in three phases: 1) the emergence of civil society; 2) its localisation, increased state control and the rise of community-based organisations; and 3) civil society in the post-2013 authoritarian context, a phase which includes the emergence of pro-government networks.

The Emergence of Civil Society

After decades of degeneration and irrelevance, civil society in its modern form found its way back into Cambodian society and politics as the country embarked on a triple transition in the early 1990s: from war to peace, from communism to capitalism, and from authoritarianism to electoralism (Hughes 2003). Following the signing of the 1991 Paris Peace Agreement and the opening up of the country that resulted, a donor-driven civil society emerged. That year, the first two Cambodian NGOs, Khemara and ADHOC, were established (Barton 2001). Underpinned by the liberal order, civil society was considered a major plank of democracy promotion and 'the most essential guarantee against the recurrence of the state repression of the past' (Hughes 2003: 138). Advocacy NGOs such as LICADHO and ADHOC, involved in activities related to human rights and the rule of law, were prominent. These organisations diffused new values of human rights and rule of law into Cambodian society (Ledgerwood & Un 2003). Thus, a UN report concluded that 'Cambodian political and civil society began a process of re-establishment, many aspects of which are even now perhaps irreversible.' (Hughes 2003: 138)

During this early phase, the existence of NGOs was tolerated but restricted by the government. Since 1996, several attempts to draft a law to regulate NGOs were made by the government but would not materialise until 2015 (Un 2006). This rather favourable regulatory climate contributed to NGOs' relative freedom to carry out their projects. Civil society was not perceived as a risk to state dominance and its presence brought international legitimacy that was sorely needed, as the government depended heavily on international aid (Henke 2011). Moreover, the government prioritised the rebuilding and consolidation of state institutions over establishing control over NGOs (Bandyopadhyay & Khus 2013)

In terms of funding, the 1990s was an age of abundance. It was a period of 'international aid money chasing NGOs' with more available resources

than there were NGOs capable of managing them and implementing projects according to international donor standards (Öjendal 2013: 26). Although the number of NGOs rose rapidly from the middle of the 1990s, to correct the imbalance, many of them lacked capacity and experience, or were simply formed for the purpose of money-making (Parks 2008).

Localisation and Increased State Control: The Emergence of Community-Based Organisations

From the early 2000s onwards, two 'structural shifts' unfolded in the domain of civil society. First, international NGOs gradually embarked on localisation by supporting the formation of local NGOs (Bandyopadhyay & Khus 2013; Öjendal 2013; Barton 2001). Notable examples of localisation include the establishment of the agricultural NGO CEDAC and the capacity-building NGO SILAKA in 1997. Second, international and local NGOs started to expand their operations beyond Phnom Penh, to sponsor development activities in rural areas. This process facilitated the development of home-grown, issue-based organisations such as FACT, which works on fishery issues around the Tonle Sap (Öjendal 2013), and later the mushrooming of CBOs from early 2000s onwards.

This next phase of civil society evolution was also defined by the emergence of CBOs, which were found in every village in Cambodia by the mid-2000s (Öjendal 2013). These included water user groups, fishery communities, forestry communities and school support committees, formed in response to the expansion of irrigation systems, fishery and forest-related crimes and the need for primary school monitoring (ibid). These local associations worked closely with local authorities, while receiving organisational and financial support from local NGOs. Decentralisation reform beginning in 2002, with the election of commune councils, opened a vital local space for civil society. Commune councils were mandated to promote local development and democracy, and a dynamic cooperation with NGOs was seen as a crucial means to this end. A study by Kim and Öjendal (2012) found that commune councils were relatively more open to working with NGOs on most issues – particularly service delivery and poverty reduction. Furthermore, commune councils considered CSOs as important partners in local development, and perceived themselves as more dependent on CSOs than vice versa (ibid).

Although the government recognised the significant role played by NGOs, its cooperation with them followed an uneven pattern based on its distinction

between 'political' and 'local development' NGOs (Rodan & Hughes 2012). Development NGOs that contributed to the government's capacity building and poverty reduction goals maintained relatively good partnerships with the government. For advocacy NGOs critical of the government's performance in human rights and democracy, the relationship with the government was defined by antagonism and suspicion. These NGOs were accused of aligning themselves with the agenda of the political opposition and of exaggerating the human rights situation in Cambodia to discredit the government and attract funding support (Un 2006; Bandyopadhyay & Khus 2013). Their legitimacy and representativeness was also questioned by the government, given their accountability to international donors and lack of grassroots embeddedness (Malena & Chhim 2009; Ou & Kim 2013). The year 2005, when a number of high-profile human rights activists were arrested on charges of defaming the government, marked the beginning of the shrinking of political space for NGOs (Öjendal 2013).

At the local level, the state–civil society relationship was far from linear and unproblematic. Despite the good will, CBOs and commune councils did not meet regularly unless there were pressing issues to be solved. Hierarchical social norms prevented easy and direct communication between CBOs and commune councils (Kim & Öjendal 2007). The dearth of CBO–commune council interaction also had a structural cause. As the lowest level of the government, the elected commune councils have meagre financial resources and limited authority, a fact that is not commensurate with their broad mandate. In consequence, commune councils were often incapable of solving sensitive and critical issues, such as those related to natural resources often raised by CBOs (ibid: 42). In addition, political elites captured some CBOs, with local authorities including village chiefs and commune councillors serving in CBO leadership positions. The appointment of CPP-affiliated local officials cast doubt on the autonomy and representativeness of CBOs, and brought complaints about state inference in CBO affairs (Ou 2013).

Meanwhile, international funding for NGOs had decreased by the early 2000s (Khieng 2014b: 1443), while the economy rapidly transformed, enriching a small group of elite actors with personal and political ties to the state and the CPP. The personalised networks of loyalty and clientelism that underpinned the state, the military and the party were successfully used to exclude political opponents from significant opportunities – a pattern that had already been established in the 1990s.

As international donors' ability to press for substantial political and economic accountability became limited, they began to ponder the effectiveness of NGOs in advocating for democratic reforms and poverty reduction. The issue of funding decline was further complicated by the rapid growth in the number of NGOs by the turn of the millennium onwards and the NGOs thus having to compete for a shrinking resource base (Parks 2008; Khieng 2014b). According to one estimate, only one third of around 3,000 registered local NGOs remained active and funded by 2012 (CCC 2012). To weather the funding cut, some NGOs adopted a market-based approach, by selling their products and/or service to generate income (Khieng 2014a). However, the self-generating income for NGOs remained a small fraction of their total budget and NGOs typically did not become self-sufficient. It was also challenging for some NGOs to balance making money and pursuing their objectives (Khieng & Dahles 2015a). The situation in the last two decades has thus inverted that in the 1990s, turning into a period of 'NGOs chasing international aid.' Hughes (2009) observes the trend as representing 'atomising strategies' on the part of donors – concentrating support in a selective group of established NGOs with a track record of delivering their expected outputs. These established or 'strong' NGOs were estimated to number 30–40 out of the approximately 100 NGOs that dominated the NGO sector (Malena & Chhim 2009).

Civil Society in the Post-2013 Authoritarian Context

Civil society entered a new and critical phase following the 2013 general election, when the popularity of the ruling CPP was seriously tested by the unified opposition party. The near- defeat in 2013 and concerns about a possible electoral defeat in 2018 prompted the government to not only dissolve and outlaw the opposition Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP) in 2017, but also to silence remaining independent critical voices. The CNRP's officials and leaders were targeted by the government's lawsuits and suppressions. The party was dissolved in 2017 after its President Kem Sokha was charged with 'treason' based on the new Political Party Law, signalling a shift to hegemonic authoritarianism (Prak & Lefevre 2017; Morgenbesser 2019). The government shut down dozens of independent and pro-opposition radio broadcasters (Beban, Schoenberger & Lamb 2020; Boyle & Kann 2018). The closure of the *Cambodia Daily*, after it was charged with failure to pay tax, and the sale of the *Phnom Penh Post* removed

the most consistently independent sources of news in Cambodia, which had been in operation since the early 1990s (Paddock 2017). The pro-government broadcast and print news outlets now dominate the media landscape. The most influential digital outlet is government mouthpiece *Fresh News*, which has been instrumental in 'enabling, legitimising, and seeking to craft support' for the CPP's increasing authoritarianism (Norén-Nilsson 2021b). New legislation, passed in 2015 and 2016 respectively, has increased the regulation and oversight of NGOs and trade unions, imposing onerous registration and reporting commitments and incorporating threats of heavy punishment for transgressors. In 2015, after many back-and-forth exchanges between the government and civil society, the fourth draft of the Law on Association and Non-Governmental Organisations (LANGO) was passed, leaving many civil society concerns unaddressed. It marked the finalisation of the government's long-standing efforts – stretching back to the 1990s – to regulate the civil society sector. Major advocacy NGOs are increasingly monitored on their political neutrality (Curley 2018), and face greater challenges in balancing their advocacy approach to identify the sweet spot between pro-opposition and pro-government. A Telecoms Law, passed in 2016, allows the government virtually unlimited scope to wire-tap, and prescribes heavy punishment for telecoms use that 'infringes national security' (LICADHO 2016).

With the CNRP removed from competition in the 2018 election, the CPP proceeded to win all 125 seats in Parliament, cementing its monopoly on power (Morgenbesser 2019). New legislation proposed by the government during the Covid-19 pandemic sowed worries that it could provide more tools enabling control and repression of the already shrinking civic space. With the backdrop of the Covid-19 pandemic, the State of Emergency law was hastily enacted in 2020. The law, if put into effect, would grant immense power to the government to ensure public safety and social order (Sun 2020). At the time of writing, the Public Order Law and the Internet Gateway Law await approval from the Parliament. The former appears to aim at curbing the exercise of fundamental freedoms (Kennedy & Southern 2021). The latter, which has been likened to China's Great Firewall, would grant control of online traffic in Cambodia to a private operator (Hutt 2017). These new pieces of legislation, if passed, will enhance the government's weaponisation of the legal framework to restrict freedom of expression and association even further.

The post-2013 political environment has been harsh for NGOs, particularly NGOs engaging in human rights advocacy. Key provisions of the

LANGO that are contested by NGOs include arduous requirements for registration, compliance with financial and activity reports, especially sources of funding, and demonstration of political neutrality (Palatino 2015). It has been argued that the LANGO has CBOs, which had become vocal in challenging the government and expanded fast at the local level, as its primary target (Gemzell 2017).

The government's concerted efforts to erode the space for civil society also include a multitude of tactics reaching beyond legislation, such as 'arbitrary detention of activists, violent reactions to civic action, and in some cases, the execution of targeted killings' and narratives debilitating the legitimacy of civic society actors, all of which have sparked fear, self-censorship and suspicion (Mooney & Baydas 2018). Increased state surveillance and control has been most strongly felt by advocacy NGOs. The majority of NGOs (67%) said that they need to ask for permission from provincial authorities to implement their activities in the field (national survey conducted in 2017, unpublished), in some cases despite having a collaboration with the Ministry of Interior. NGO activities, including public forums, have been monitored and, in some cases, banned by local authorities. There are also cases of NGOs being warned or blacklisted by local authorities for their activities. Some NGOs were asked to reveal the identities of their staff, and some reported that their staff had been trailed by the police.

There has been a widespread move on the part of NGOS to change their engagement strategy with the government in this new context. One strategy for mitigating tensions with the government has been to avoid confrontation and to work more closely with the government. Many NGOs have thus modified their activities, complying with requests from the local authority, have avoided sensitive issues, used neutral words, and striven to take up a non-biased position in relation to politics (Gemzell 2017).

Donors have generally agreed with this approach, unwillingly adopted by NGOs, considering it to be helpful and constructive in the current political context (Mooney & Baydas 2018). In advocacy work, CSOs are advised by their funders to take the middle way, and minimise confrontations. Donors have also increasingly focused their support to CSOs on capacity and skills related to communication and relationships with government counterparts, encouraging approaches that involve constructive engagement and story-telling (EWMI 2018; Andre & Pak 2020). The changes in national-level politics have also had a significant effect on relations between local authorities and CBOs. Two general trends can be identified. On the one hand, commune

authorities value CBOs for their funding, which can contribute to local investment programs, for their relationship with higher tiers of the government, as well as for their knowledge capital and skills in public speaking. CBOs can, for these reasons, receive strong cooperation from the authorities. On the other hand, commune authorities are cautious when dealing with CBOs because of their perceived leaning towards the opposition party. However, while NGOs are seen as challenging, intrusive and inciting, CBOs are considered weak and, as such, 'easy to control' by the authorities (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2020).

A further government strategy has been to create and sponsor satellite civil society platforms. One of them is the Civil Society Alliance Forum (CSAF), which was established by governmental decree in 2016 and is headed by officials from the Council of Ministers. CSAF claims to promote national development by boosting cooperation between the government and civil society actors and unions. However, it is best understood as a part of the government's attempts to further weaken independent CSOs and provide a façade for Cambodia's faltering civic space (Comfrel 2020). CSOs taking part in the annual dialogue that CSAF organises complained that CSAF only pays lip service to the problems that they raise, rather than actually solving them (USAID 2018; Ry 2019). The CSAF is one of very few CSOs known to have received funding from Chinese ICT company Huawei, mainly for humanitarian projects (Huawei 2021).

The main lifeline of local NGOs, foreign funding, is repeatedly contested by the government. The government has accused the CNRP of preparing a 'colour revolution' to overthrow the government, an attempt linked to some NGOs receiving foreign funding, particularly from the US (Chheng & Baliga 2017). A new anti-money laundering law requires scrutiny of NGO finances (Hun 2019). Also, and tellingly, in a recent arrest of outspoken young environmental activists these were accused of financial terrorism and of using foreign funding to topple the government (Sun 2021). The government's charges of connections between international donors/organisations, the opposition party and NGOs also have implications for provincially-based NGOs and CBOs, as they have increasingly become the target of harassment and violent attacks (Hul 2018; O'Byrne 2017).

Government aggression toward NGOs is directly linked to politics, demonstrated by the fact that key NGO leaders have been accused of supporting the outlawed opposition party. Some NGOs leaders are alleged to have mobilised voter support for the opposition party in the 2013 national election. NGOs

have become more cautious about operating in the field and expressing critical views publicly. However, amid the challenges experienced by NGOs engaging in human rights and democracy, NGOs implementing development-oriented projects have experienced a more benign and enabling environment. Service delivery and development NGOs are still able to engage with the state at both national and local levels, and opportunities for development NGOs have expanded or remained stable.

The negative repercussions resulting from the narrowing civic space and reduced connections between NGOs and oppositional politics have affected all types of NGOs. The suppression of NGOs, previously understood as mainly targeting the advocacy work, has, in fact, also produced a chilling effect on service delivery NGOs. A recent survey by Duke University found that NGOs in the service domain had been harassed by the local authorities, who suspected their political involvement. Unless it can be verified that they have no political motivations and they are able to establish that they can be trusted, non-state service delivery projects have been hindered in their work (Springman et al. 2022). While political sensitivity has been used to justify restriction of advocacy NGOs, the harassment of NGOs working in service delivery by local authorities, who overemphasise the political nature of the work of these NGOs, appears to be rooted in corruption. Schröder & Young (2022) have also found that NGOs working to promote sustainable development goals (SGDs) have been unable to operate to their fullest potential. This state of affairs has negatively impacted public support for and participation in the work of NGOs, both in urban and in rural areas (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2020).

In this context, the new set of elite actors within civil society that has emerged is more politically enmeshed than the previous generation of expatriate NGOs. Reflecting these closer ties, some elite activists from civil society have boundary crossed from civil society to other fields, including the state and political fields. The social and knowledge capital they have accumulated from working experiences and diverse networks is key to their boundary crossing. The ongoing decline in foreign funding has prompted members of these elites to take on a domestic orientation and to navigate diverse and novel organisational forms (Norén-Nilsson & Eng 2020).

Aid-dependent NGOs are constrained by the way in which international donors have shifted their support away from Cambodia. From 2015, there was a particularly strong decline in funding for civil society (Ker 2018). The NGO sector acknowledges that it cannot continue without funding

support from international donors, raising questions over its future. Some NGOs are lobbying the government for funding to work in partnership with state agencies on development projects. Others involve themselves in income-earning activities – in 2013, Khieng (2014b) found that one in five NGOs were doing this. This commercialisation gives way to the emergence of NGOs that have turned into social enterprises (Khieng & Dahles 2015 a & b). However, the prediction made by Khieng & Dahles that this trend would intensify in the next five years barely materialised. USAID (2020) reported that nearly all revenue-generating activities by NGOs are still weak, and that such activities could lead to the operations of these NGOs becoming overstretched and falling short of their intended objectives. Crowd-funding is a potential channel of funding. In 2016, USAID teamed up with the private sector to create a crowd-funding platform called 'TosFund' (or Let's Fund) for local NGOs (Gaudemar 2016). However, neither crowd-funding nor social enterprises are anywhere near being viable alternatives for the majority of NGOs in Cambodia. The Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated the funding issues faced by some local NGOs, with the unexpected plunge in funding provided by donors due to the pandemic coming in tandem with the cessation of NGO income-generating activities (Soeung & Lee 2021).

Cambodia's New Pro-Government Networks

Since 2013, the CPP has paid much greater attention to younger constituencies in both campaign strategy and in policy initiatives. New campaign strategies have included numerous visits by Prime Minister Hun Sen to meet garment workers, combined with policy announcements of increased wages and, particularly, social insurance schemes, the cabinet reshufflings and educational reforms etc. (Eng & Hughes 2017). Meanwhile, several pro-government youth networks have launched new high-profile initiatives to promote participation, pride and achievement amongst the young. The activities of networks led by individuals from the private sector are another noteworthy phenomenon in Cambodia's civil society landscape.

These pro-government networks feature a variety of forms. This section showcases five examples of these pro-government networks. Firstly, the Union of Youth Federations of Cambodia (UYFC), headed by Prime Minister Hun Sen's son, Hun Many, has been responsible for a series of successful world-record-setting attempts, including the largest Madison performance

(2,015 dancers), the longest dragon boat (286ft) and cooking the largest ever sticky-rice cake (8,900 lbs) (Wallace 2019). Another pro-government initiative called GoGo Cambodia, also founded by Hun Many and later led by Dr Sann Vathana, was responsible for the Krama Campaign, which in 2018 set a world record by weaving the longest ever scarf (3,720 feet). Its motto features an aspiration to 'mobilise Cambodian pride in various sectors from education to national defence, and translate this goal into a platform whereby every single Cambodian can show his/her individual pride as a Cambodian and Cambodia's pride at large to the international community'. Thirdly, there is the Cambodia Development Centre (CD Centre), a think tank established in 2017 to contribute to finding policy solutions to Cambodia's development challenges. Headed by Dav Ansan, it aims to achieve its objectives via scientific research, the development of national and international policy and human resource development. Fourthly, there is the project Phnom Penh SAAT or 'Clean Phnom Penh', which was co-founded in 2017 by H.E. Hun Many and four successful young entrepreneurs. SAAT's objective is to alleviate pressing environmental issues in Phnom Penh and beyond by instigating behavioural change on waste management. Finally, there is the Junior Chamber International (JCI) Cambodia, an insider business network linking CPP-affiliated entrepreneurs and businesses. Its public outreach includes projects in social activism to promote positive changes in the health, educational and environmental sectors at community level, as well as a pandemic response, providing, in conjunction with government officials, 'One Pack One Love' packages for thousands of poor families.

The UYFC has gone through multiple reincarnations. In 1978, it was born as the youth wing of the Kampuchean United Front for National Salvation (KUFNS), the United Youth Association, whose first leader was Hun Sen. It became a youth NGO, as the Youth Association of Cambodia (YAC), in 1990. In 2012, the YAC's Third Congress, attended by the Prime Minister, voted for it to become the UYFC (Khy 2018). The UYFC remains the largest youth organisation in the country, holding a de facto monopoly over engagement with the young, with a nation-wide structure that runs deep down to community level. There are many UYFC-organised programmes – to name a few, these include the UYFC Scholarship, the UYFC Doctors' Alliance, the Promotion of Young Entrepreneurs in Agriculture and Agri-industry and Election Monitoring. There are three ways in which the government utilises the UYFC. Firstly, it has become a medium for co-opting young people within the population to

support the CPP (Kelly-Lyall, Loughlin & Pak 2019; Norén-Nilsson 2021c). Secondly, its activities are used by the government to support its claim that civic space is not shrinking (USAID 2018). Thirdly, it regenerates incumbent elites, serving as a platform for scions of the ruling families to build their careers (Norén-Nilsson 2021c). Hun Many, the Prime Minister's youngest son, is the president of the UYFC, while the other figures in the leadership hierarchy are the top government brass's offspring, a generation next in line in the political succession. It appears to be the main platform on which the next generation of CPP members are able to demonstrate their abilities, their accumulated political capital and their popularity. Their positions within the UYFC disguise them as the youth leaders, which allows them to get closer to younger constituencies. It is worth noting that the timing of the establishment and development of UYFC activities has coincided with significant changes within the CPP, through which younger officials, including the children of many senior officials, have been promoted to prominent positions in the party and the government (Eng & Hughes 2017).

The two other networks, the CD Centre and GoGo Cambodia, are led by two individuals who are members of the state elite. Both are close associates of Hun Many. Dr Sann Vathana, who heads GoGo Cambodia, is currently Under Secretary of State in the Ministry of Education (MoEYS). Dav Ansan, who heads CD Centre, is Under Secretary of State in the Ministry of Industry, Science, Technology and Innovation, Head of the Department of International Relations and a member of the Central Committee of the UYFC. GoGo Cambodia's biggest project was the 2018 Krama campaign, which gathered 300,000 participants (Norén-Nilsson 2021a). It has ceased to be active since then. The structure and operation of the CD Centre are similar to those of a typical think-tank. The Centre promotes policy research, discussions and engagement between stakeholders. Its programmes, such as the Cambodian Speakers Dialogue and the Public Lecture, invite policymakers and academics to speak. Hun Many, Sann Vathana and Dav An San are also all major figures in Cambodia's education sector: Hun Many is the Chairman of the Committee on Education, Youth, Sport, Religious Affairs, Culture and Tourism in the National Assembly, and Sann Vathana and Dav An San both occupy high-level posts in education.

JCI Cambodia and SAAT, by contrast, were founded by members of elites in the economic field. Their leaders' social and economic capital was instrumental in setting them up and operating them. The former was established,

following a global JCI model, by a number of like-minded businesspersons. JCI Cambodia is organised in a decentralised fashion into Local Chapters, which deliver social projects and business training programmes. Besides cementing bonds among members of economic elites, JCI Cambodia organises one-off, short-term projects at the local level, involving young university students in these. SAAT is a joint initiative of members of elites from the economic and political fields. The presence of Hun Many, though probably honorary, indicates his strong backing for the initiative. Notably, Mr. Chi Sela was both the co-founder of JCI Cambodia and of SAAT, and Mrs. Chea Sophalla, President of JCI Cambodia, also co-founded SAAT. SAAT is supported by the Ministry of Environment and signed a MoU for a three-year cooperation. The linkage with members of the political elite is an important form of capital for the project, in terms of its successful implementation.

Unlike more usual forms of civil society organisation, these newly-bred organisations do not depend on Western donors for resources but on a diversified range of locally-generated funds. The sponsorship of the private sector is the source of the majority of their funds. The networks that the organisers possess enable them to easily accrue external funding. For example, JCI Cambodia has a network of businesspersons who can sponsor their own projects and enlist others to support them. It also has a membership system that collects an annual fee. Both large corporations and small businesses have been financial and in-kind sponsors of major events such as the Angkor Songkranta organised by UYFC and the Krama Campaign organised by GoGo Cambodia. Sponsorship is their most sustainable and effective form of funding. Other smaller stream of finance come from public donations, contributions from participants and membership fees. Social media is an effective platform for reaching out the potential local donors, who are welcomed for either their cash or in-kind contributions. The advent of online banking services has enabled donors to send money easily to the organisers.

Other important differences between the activities of these networks and those of the internationally funded NGOs concern membership and engagement with youth at large. The UYFC and JCI Cambodia both have a membership system. The client-patronage system is a useful tool to explain the benefits of membership. As a UYFC member, young people gain the opportunity to become visible and to stand out vis-à-vis members of the political elite. As membership in these organisations expands, the initiative is intended to provide tangible rewards to loyal young people and to demonstrate the

utility of inclusion within the CPP system, challenging the opposition characterisation of Cambodia as a country for rich and powerful investors at the expense of ordinary Cambodians. Apart from signifying political allegiance, UYFC is a platform for volunteering for individuals, from high school students to working people. With regard to the JCI Cambodia, membership gives individuals access to a club to which businesspeople belong, through which they can create their own business network. Volunteerism is celebrated among Cambodian young people who are nearing the end of their years at school and are about to start university. Most believe it is a pathway to improve their opportunities to find employment. Many of the projects that are organised by the above organisations recruit hundreds of young high school and university students as volunteers to support the projects.

The paternalist and nationalist approach of the CPP organisations harks back to the motivating spirit of the socialist youth movements sponsored by the party in the 1980s (Kuch & Lewis 2013). These examples illustrate a wider trend in Cambodia, which is that youth associations have generally been directed by older adults, and have been seen primarily as training grounds for socialising young people, rather than as vehicles for civic engagement on their part and as a means through which they can determine their own needs (Raffin 2012). The attempts to co-opt young people by these pro-government networks complement and exemplify the old-school systematic approach used by the MoEYS to nurture a favourable political view of the CPP on the part of the young. For instance, in the early 2000s the MoEYS founded a scout association led by former Deputy Prime Minister Sok An and other CPP high-ranking officers, which in 2006 merged with the rival royalist party FUNCINPEC-led scouts (McKinney 2001). Its members usually join CPP-organised events and major celebrations such as the commemoration of the Khmer Rouge collapse (Hughes 2010; Dorn 2012). Since 2013, the MoEYS has taken on an increasingly prominent role in supporting and co-ordinating the participation of the young in CPP-friendly youth organisations including the UYFC, resulting in new forms of interlinkages between members of the state elite, the political elite and the civil society elite (Norén-Nilsson 2021c). The 2015 MoEYS decision to ban political activism in school is belied by the fact that pro-CPP activities are never hindered (Aun 2015).

In summary, three key elements can be discerned that reflect the logic of the CPP system in its attitude toward civic participation. Government leaders have supported and promoted nationalist approaches in these organisations

that seek to inculcate a spirit of solidarity with the 'base' among urban young people and members of the elite. These newly-formed NGOs have emerged in an attempt to channel the energies of the young into more constructive avenues. One prominent activity has been the participation of urban young people in volunteering in social activities in various parts of the country. This allows urban middle-class young people to have an opportunity to experience life in communities and to contribute to national development. As such, it represents a vision of building solidarity amongst young people from different communities as wealth inequality has widened, while also promoting employment skills for the volunteers.

Conclusion

Cambodian civil society has gone through a long period of re-emergence, localisation and state suppression. The deepening of authoritarianism in Cambodia has been accompanied by the de-legitimation of foreign-funded civil society. Advocacy CSOs now find themselves in a repressive environment. CSOs in the development sector, though treated with more leniency by the government, are also negatively impacted by the overall politicisation of civil society. The analysis above suggests two directions for CSOs in Cambodia. The government's increased intolerance of critical voices has prompted NGOs to self-censor and avoid risks, with their future sustainability increasingly dependent on international organisations and regional networks for funding. Meanwhile, international funding is waning and CSOs have to devise a survival strategy, including self-income-generating activities. With the shift from a civil society defined by the presence of international and internationally-funded CSOs, new patterns of civil society are emerging characterised by the voluntary and involuntary political enmeshment of CSOs and their elites. The boundary crossing of civil society leaders is an important dynamic in the context of dwindling financial resources and deepening authoritarianism.

Part of the new architecture of civil society is pro-government networks, which are vehicles for co-option into existing vertical structures of patronage-based development. The networks have become a context in which to induce support for the CPP's future generations of leaders and to cement their role in politics. Overall, the cross-field elite connections and seemingly apolitical nature of these initiatives have given them an overriding advantage

in organising and mobilising resources. These initiatives complement and partner with the government towards common goals. These new forms of organisation perpetuate existing elites, rather than facilitating the emergence of new elite actors capable of articulating and taking critical civic action.

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CHAPTER 4

Civil Society in Indonesia

Willy Purna Samadhi
Norin Abhiseka[1]

This chapter seeks to illustrate the current situation of civil society in Indonesia, thereby providing context for the Indonesian case studies presented in subsequent chapters. For this purpose, this chapter is divided into two major sections. In the first, it explores the development of civil society in Indonesia from the volunteer movements of the pre-independence era to the more formal organisations of the authoritarian New Order. This historical background is important to consider, given how Indonesian civil society has evolved dynamically over almost a century. One important aspect of its evolution is that interaction between civil society, political society and the state is not new; rather, this can be traced back to the emergence of Indonesian civil society. This historical exploration will also reveal when and how civil society in Indonesia developed its relations with international donors.

Subsequently, the second section will explore the dynamics of post-1998 Indonesian civil society, as this is relevant to the themes covered in this book. Three important phenomena will be explored here: the fragmentation of sector- and issue-based CSOs; CSOs (with strong grassroots) being used as a shortcut to electoral politics, with civil society activists seeking to directly influence the political and policy decision-making processes by occupying political and government offices; and contestation amongst civil society activists for access to political offices and public resources. Understanding these three phenomena is necessary to reveal how subfields within civil society are formed, how civil society activists interact, and how civil society activists use their political activities to establish linkages with state actors in

1 The initial design of this chapter was prepared in conjunction with Cornelis Lay. After his death in 2020, the authors continued writing, making significant changes to the initial design. As such, they alone bear the responsibility for the contents of this chapter.

democratic Indonesia. In this context, international donor institutions have been highly influential.

In its final section, this chapter will conclude with a brief discussion of the challenges faced by civil society in its continued efforts to promote democratisation in Indonesia. Many studies have indicated that Indonesia's democracy is stagnating, or even regressing. In this, it is not alone; scholars have noted a global 'wave of autocratisation', occurring as pushback against the third wave of democratisation. In this context, it is important to recognise the influence of civil society activists within the state field and their efforts to ward off autocratisation.

The Rise of Civil Society in Indonesia

Pre-Independence CSOs and their Basic Services Provision Orientation

The history of civil society in Indonesia reaches back even further than the term itself, having existed in some form since before the country's independence. History records several civil society activists and organisations in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Generally speaking, these were associations of volunteers who sought to voice their interests to the colonial government (Fakih 1991: 2), and they included *Boedi Oetomo* and *Taman Siswa*. These organisations promoted education, religious activities, healthcare and commercial activities (Hadiwinata 2003). The formation of these civil associations was influenced by the emergence of ideas and the spirit of nationalism among intellectual figures who had the opportunity to obtain higher education thanks to the 'ethical politics' policy of the Dutch East Indies Government in early 20th century. Therefore, even though these civil associations were active in the social sphere, they were the offspring of economic, social and political resistance to colonialism and imperialism.

Also important in the evolution of civil society in Indonesia was the establishment of *Muhammadiyah* (1912) and *Nahdlatul Ulama* (NU, 1926). Over nearly a century, these Islamic organisations have become the largest organisations in the country, and in this capacity they have contributed significantly to politics in Indonesia. In 1954, NU established its own political party. It used this party to contest the legislative elections of 1955 (placing third) and 1971 (placing second). More recently, the selection of Abdurrahman Wahid as Indonesia's fourth president (serving from 1999 to 2001) was inextricably tied to his prominence in NU. Meanwhile, though

Muhammadiyah has never transformed formally into a political party, its political role and influence are no less important. All of Indonesia's cabinets have included figures from Muhammadiyah. Nevertheless, in the *Reformasi* era (post-1998), when Indonesia implemented a multiparty system and electoral democracy, activists from NU and Muhammadiyah have also become politically active through the National Awakening Party (Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa, PKB)[2] and the National Mandate Party (PAN, Partai Amanat Nasional), respectively.

However, the penetration of NU and Muhammadiyah into politics cannot be separated from the presence of Masjumi (established in 1943). This organisation was originally formed by the Japanese occupation regime to suppress and control the power of Islamic groups, and because of that it was created in the form of a federation that brought together NU, Muhammadiyah, and other Islamic organisations. Shortly after independence, in November 1945, Masjumi transformed into a political party – the only Islamic party at the time. The Masjumi Party became a large and influential political force as it had support from almost all existing Islamic organisations, ranging from modernist groups such as Muhammadiyah to more traditional ones such as NU (Feit 2007: 134–135). Although NU founded its own party in 1954, in the 1955 election Masjumi took second place under the Indonesian National Party (Partai Nasional Indonesia, PNI).

Although such civil society organisations are quite distinct from the modern ones that have emerged since the New Order era, consideration of them is nonetheless quite important, as they and their legacies remain influential. For example, although they have ebbed and flowed over time, ties between civil society and political society (i.e. state and political institutions) and between civil society and business remain strong.

The New Order Era and Developmentalist NGOs

The interaction between civil society and political society continued in the post-independence era. Aspinall (2004) writes that in the first two decades after Indonesia became independent civil associations developed rapidly. Most were closely associated with political parties, and as such they were '…

2 PKB is not the only recent party to extensively involve NU leaders; the organisation's leaders were also involved in the short-lived Ulama National Awakening Party (*Partai Kebangkitan Nasional Ulama*, PKNU).

highly mobilized and politicized… [and] …took the form of '*aliran* politics' (ibid. 63–64) – something that became a prominent characteristic of Indonesian politics at that time.[3] Aspinall notes, however, that during that time civil society in Indonesia may have sought to benefit from the state, 'even to mold it to their advantage, but they [did] not attempt to capture, overthrow, or fundamentally reconstruct it' (ibid.: 65).

The highly politicised nature of civil society changed rapidly after the political turmoil of 1965–66 resulted in President Soekarno being replaced by Soeharto. Although both regimes were authoritarian, their tendencies were markedly different. Enjoying solid support from the military and anti-communist Western states, Soeharto was able to fully control the state and its apparatuses. By reducing the number of political parties in the early 1970s, Soeharto was also able to minimise the influence of his political opponents. This had a significant impact on civil society, which had previously been closely associated with political parties, and pushed civil society organisations into functioning only in non-political matters, including providing basic services in education and health care.

At the same time, however, Soeharto's authoritarian approach to power promoted the rise of a new civil society, one driven primarily by Indonesian intellectuals. Uhlin (1997) describes opposition to the Soeharto government in the early years of the regime as follows: 'From 1970 until January 1972, protests were directed against corruption … the government suppressed the protests by arresting several student leaders as well as newspaper editors. Arief Budiman, one of the student leaders, left Indonesia for overseas studies shortly after the crackdown.' (ibid.: 85)

In the face of this repression, civil society shrank rapidly. Activists were forced to employ a more moderate approach to survive, even as they remained critical of Soeharto's policy. However, in doing so, they played into Soeharto's political design, becoming agents of development and in effect supporting the ideology of the state. Fakih reveals that, in the 1970s, NGO activists focused on the developmentalist issues that characterised the New Order regime, without truly rejecting the basic concepts and ideals of developmentalism.

3 The term *aliran* was first introduced by Clifford Geertz (1959) when describing his findings regarding the pattern of Indonesian social integration, which at that time had led to a specific configuration of competing political forces. Geertz identified four main *aliran*, namely: the Nationalists (PNI - Indonesian National Party); the Communists (PKI - Indonesian Communist Party); the Modernist Moslems (Masjumi); and the Orthodox Moslems (NU). See Aspinall (2004: 63–64).

'Their questions and critiques were focused more on the methodological and technological aspects of developmentalism … such as the use of bottom-up or top-down approaches … Consequently, the issues of a 'bottom-up' approach and public participation were widely discussed.' (Fakih 1996: 4) Fakih thus argues that the programmes pursued by most civil society activists were aligned with the interests of the Soeharto government: developing small industries, increasing incomes, providing health services, advocating for family planning, and carrying out other pro-development activities. They differed only in their approach; activists used a bottom-up approach rather than a top-down one (ibid.: 4–5). In carrying out these activities, they got support from various international organisations, which not only provided funds but also specific programmes, such as the poverty alleviation programme carried out by Plan International. This phase is also marked by an increased engagement of Indonesian civil society with donor agencies (see Chapter 7).

Looking at the historical context, the incorporation of civil society into the government's developmentalist paradigm appears to have been unavoidable. Hadiwinata (2003) shows that the evolution of civil society organisations (CSOs) was influenced by two situations. First, the New Order government had limited capacity for dealing with the country's deep-rooted poverty. Second, academics and student activists were driven to establish non-governmental organisations – popularly known as *organisasi non-pemerintah*, or *ornop,* a direct translation of the English term – to address the effects of government development programmes. These factors were mutually complementary, and, given that this was the case, Hadiwinata argues that the government was willing to accept non-governmental organisations so long as they increased programme efficiency (especially in the health and capacity-building sectors) and that they were not involved in political activities such as mobilisation of citizens to protest against the government. Over time, a new term emerged, one that reflected the New Order government's priorities: *lembaga swadaya masyarakat* (LSM), or 'self-reliance organisation'. This all laid the foundations for Indonesia's future CSOs.

It is in this context that Indonesia's professional CSOs emerged, including Bina Desa and the Indonesian Forum for the Environment (*Wahana Lingkungan Hidup*, Walhi). Bina Desa, established in 1975, has focused on developing villages and their communities, including through agrarian reform. Meanwhile, as an environmentalist organisation, Walhi has focused its efforts towards promoting conservation and mitigating the detrimental effects of

government development programmes. There is also another organisation that is worth mentioning: the Indonesian Association for Family Planning (*Perkumpulan Keluarga Berencana Indonesia*, PKBI), established in 1957. Unlike the organisations discussed previously, which were stifled by the New Order government owing to their association with political parties, PKBI was accepted by the Soeharto regime, as its focus was perceived as being unthreatening and 'politically neutral' (Lassa & Li 2015: 18).

In addition to the three empowerment-oriented CSOs mentioned above, during this period several organisations with the characteristics of research institutions were established (especially the most important ones: LP3ES – Institute for Social and Economic Research, and LSP – Development Studies Institute), driven by critical intellectuals, as well as aid agencies (YLBHI – Indonesian Legal Aid Foundation), which aimed to provide legal assistance to the poor (see Chapter 7). The presence of these three institutions driven by critical intellectuals reminds us of the role of educated and enlightened figures in the 1920s.

However, most of the CSOs established in 1970s Indonesia served to supplement the state's development activities (Hadiwinata 2009: 281). Over time, however, the tendency of CSOs to focus on development issues was criticised by global intellectuals and academics as part of their critique of developmentalism (Fakih 1996: 10). Several Indonesian activists and intellectuals, having discussed such critiques in conferences and meetings with their peers, were influenced by this paradigm and developed alternative views regarding the vision, mission and role of CSOs. This, in turn, stimulated the rise of new ideas regarding the role of civil society in democracy and democratisation (Uhlin 1997: 170).

Domestically, the development of such paradigms in the 1980s and early 1990s gave rise to ideological conflict among groups of NGOs in Indonesia. Fakih notes, for example, the fact that national congresses of CSOs in 1991 and 1992 were tainted by a heated debate between two groups: those who viewed development as necessary for poverty eradication, and those who were critical and viewed development as contributing to the problem. Furthermore, opponents of developmentalism argued that it had resulted in NGOs relying solely on project-based approaches that restricted their ability to promote social transformation and cultivate democracy (Fakih 1996: 11). Attempting to bridge these reformist and transformist paradigms were activists who promoted compromise, seeking to 'work without ideology' (Fakih 1991:

9). These groups can be divided into three types: conformist, reformist and transformist (ibid.: 8).

Over time, the increasing awareness of the importance of civil society linking itself to democratisation and social transformation created a new understanding of the link between civil society and the state. Whereas in the 1970s activists had focused on state-sponsored development initiatives, albeit using a different perspective, in the mid-1980s they began dealing with issues that positioned them vis-à-vis the state. These included human rights, legal aid, gender equality and 'lower class politics' – i.e. labour and peasant rights. One of the CSOs discussed in this book, the Consortium for Agrarian Reform (*Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria*, KPA), was established during this period and within this context (see Chapter 10).

These issues are not new at all, but the shift in perspective from developmentalism to democratisation encourage some activists and organisations to develop a new, more transformative and more critical framework. Further supporting this shift was the space available to potential opponents to the regime (including activists), which stemmed from the increased political openness of the regime (ibid.: 178).

During the third wave of democratisation, interactions between Indonesian and international activists became increasingly intensive. Therefore, there is a global factor here. In the 1980s and 1990s, multiple transnational networks were established; these included the International NGO Forum on Indonesian Development (INGI), established in 1985 and renamed INFID in 1993. At the same time, international donors became increasingly influential. This not only affected the life cycle of Indonesia's CSOs (see Lassa & Li 2015), but also resulted in the fragmentation of civil society into new subfields that reflected the interests of donors.

Certain subfields were more prominent than others, a situation influenced by the programmes and issues prioritised by donors. Organisations in these subfields had greater access to donor funds, and thus more freedom in designing and implementing their programmes. Recognising this fact can guide our understanding of the rise of, for example, YLBHI in the New Order era, or later, in the post-1998 context, Indonesian Corruption Watch (ICW). Owing to their lengthy experiences in the civil society sector, the founders of YLBHI and ICW enjoyed extensive networks with international donor institutions (see Chapter 7). At the same time, these international donors had an interest in promoting democracy and human rights (during the New

Order) and in eradicating corruption (after the beginning of Indonesia's political reform).

The influence of international donor institutions also affected relations between activists, as the funds donor institutions offered provided activists with the capital necessary for their activities. It is thus unsurprising that, in the late 1980s, a CSO elite came into being, made up of leaders who were the most influential actors in their respective sectors. During Indonesia's political reform, as the country became increasingly democratic, these elite figures were frequently at odds, as will be discussed below.

Civil Society and Post-1998 Indonesia

This section discusses the three most prominent phenomena that characterise the relationship between civil society and the democratisation of post-1998 Indonesia. First, the fragmentation of sector- and issue-based CSOs; which relates to the ways in which activists tend to focus on their specific subfields, without making any serious effort to create interactions or overlapping subfields through common interest/strategic issues among NGOs, except in relation to certain issues, such as anti-corruption (see Chapter 7). Second, the increased use of CSOs as a shortcut to politics, with activists attempting to directly influence formal political and decision-making processes by occupying political and government offices; this is inexorably linked with the structural political changes that have enabled activists to access political spaces. Third, as a result of the above two factors, many CSOs activists compete to access and control political spaces and resources. All of this – the fragmentation, the attempts to create shortcuts to politics and the contestation among the activists – have led to the creation of (1) prominent fields, namely sectors or subfields that are considered strategic in the democratisation process, and (2) a layer of elite actors in civil society, the prominent activists who have been in dominant positions in the prominent fields.

After the fall of President Soeharto, narratives of liberty mushroomed throughout Indonesia. The policy changes implemented by President B.J. Habibie further underpinned the rise of a freer political atmosphere. However, the future direction of Indonesia's post-New Order politics remained unclear. Control and power were concentrated primarily within the country's political and military elites, many members of which had been key figures in the Soeharto government. Only one word resonated: *Reformasi* (reform).

This euphoric desire for liberty and freedom provided fertile ground for CSOs and activists. The seeds of new civil society organisations and movements, sown during the New Order, blossomed rapidly, and activists shed light on many issues that had long been dealt with silently or closely monitored by the ruling regime. However, it should be recognised that the hope that CSOs would promote democratic issues and agendas were not entirely new; as early as the mid-1990s, state–civil society interactions had drawn significant attention from Indonesianists, who recognised the importance of civil society in the country's political future (Nyman 2009).

Attention to civil society in Indonesia has increased in line with the opening of post-New Order political space. Although the history of civil society movements in Indonesia can be traced back to the era of the 1970–80s – with dual characteristics, in the form of support and resistance to state power – the new hope that civil society would take advantage of political freedom and intervene in the political arena is a challenge to be studied separately. Studies of civil society are associated with democratic development – a process that is often assumed to be the substance of *reformasi*.

In the euphoric period between 1999–2002 the density of CSOs doubled from the previous period. This was facilitated by the creation of new, democratic political spaces, which enabled underground organisations to rise to the surface and unite to establish new civil society organisations (Lassa & Li 2015: 3). Since 2003, the number of CSOs has continued to increase rapidly. At the same time, however, as Indonesia stabilised politically (as marked by the National Election of 2004 and the Local Elections of 2005), these organisations became less dynamic in their activities.[4]

The evolution of CSOs has paralleled trends at the global level, where the theory and praxis of civil society have developed within the dynamic context of discourses around development and democracy. These discourses, which spread hegemonically during the third wave of democratisation, have dominated development and modernisation theories since the 1970s. Within the

4 Not only have CSOs multiplied at the national level; they have also done so at the municipal level. Data from the Ministry of Domestic Affairs indicates that as of 31 July 2019 no fewer than 420,381 local and national CSOs have been registered with the government. At the national level, 1,688 CSOs are registered with the Ministry of Domestic Affairs and 393,497 are registered with the Ministry of Law and Human Rights. Meanwhile, at the provincial level 8,170 CSOs are registered and at the municipal level there are 16,954 CSOs registered. Another 72 organisations are registered with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. nasional.kompas.com/read/2019/08/01/18223501/kemendagri-420381-ormas-terdaftar-di-indonesia.

context of democratisation, CSOs have often been perceived as new non-state actors that mediate the influence of political and business elites even as they create a bridge between the state and the population it serves. Consequently, the term civil society is often associated with opposition to authoritarianism and the fall of authoritarian regimes (e.g. see Beckman, Hansson & Sjögren 2001). In the context of development, meanwhile, civil society is often perceived as an arena wherein diverse interest groups compete and interact to frame issues and influence development agendas.

At the same time, however, the rise of new democracies in post-authoritarian nations such as Indonesia has enticed civil society activists to leave their traditional territory and expand their influence through a process known as 'boundary crossing' (see Chapter 10). This cannot be separated from the creation of new political spaces wherein activists can take political roles unavailable to earlier generations. Some scholars have identified the efforts of civil society actors to gain formal positions within government and pursue movement goals through conventional bureaucratic channels as institutional activism (Santoro & McGuire 1997). Studies of civil-society activists' use of border-crossing to enter the state field have been undertaken by, among others Mietzner (2012), Lay (2017) and Haryanto (2020).

However, in Indonesia activists did not begin 'going political' (as it is popularly known among the activists) and crossing boundaries immediately after the beginning of political reform. An assessment conducted by Demos, a Jakarta-based organisation that deals primarily with democracy and human rights issues, in conjunction with the University of Oslo (UiO), Norway, revealed that CSO activists were hesitant to enter politics, let alone penetrate the state field, as late as 2005. Activists remained haunted by 32 years of New Order suppression, and thus avoided becoming political or entering the state, which most deemed ill-suited for civil society activists and their goals (Priyono, Samadhi & Törnquist 2007). Nevertheless, activists did take advantage of Indonesia's new political openness; they lobbied politicians whom they deemed progressive and held public seminars freely.

Owing to their limited expansion in the first years of Indonesia's political reform, CSOs had little influence on the early development of Indonesian democracy. Democratic institutions were dominated by members of the former New Order elite, who rapidly adapted to the new democratic system. Indonesia's new party and electoral systems were dominated by members of the established political elite, who emerged as the dominant political force.

It was they who occupied the important positions and who controlled decision-making processes, within both the legislature and the executive. Consequently, the democratisation process was co-opted by the voices and interests of established elite groups, while CSOs and their activists were restricted to public spaces with limited political impact.[5] One ongoing consequence of this is the national party system, which provides no space for local parties, thereby limiting opportunities for broad political participation (including by CSOs and activists seeking to establish their own political parties).[6]

CSOs began to recognise the urgency of expanding political participation, including by entering the state field, after 2005. Activists desired not only to increase the effectiveness of Indonesian democracy, but also to seize the opportunities provided by the implementation of direct local elections, which provided parties with new competitive opportunities and activists with greater access. The 'Go Politics' campaign, initiated by Demos in 2005, also pushed activists to enter the political arena. Although it did not record the number of CSO activists who had entered political parties and executive agencies, the assessment made by Demos (conducted in 2007) found that significantly more activists had become involved (Samadhi & Warouw 2009).

Since then, the involvement of CSO activists in the political and state fields has become a 'new normal'. Activists who enter the state field view it as the best means of achieving their political goals (Tomsa & Setijadi 2018). Within the

5 One of the largest movements initiated by CSO activists was the 'anti-rotten politicians' movement (*Gerakan anti-politisi busuk*), announced on 29 December 2003 by top-level activists such as Nurcholis Madjid, Teten Masduki, Emmy Hafild, Faisal Basri, and HS Dillon. This movement encouraged citizens not to vote for 'rotten' politicians in Indonesia's 2004 general elections. Ultimately, this movement was ineffective, not only because it was ultimately unsustainable, but because no 'clear' alternative could be offered by CSOs concerning the grand strategy of this movement; the registration of candidates was dominated entirely by political parties.

6 CSO activists' efforts to establish political parties are evidenced, for example, by the People's Alliance Party (*Partai Perserikatan Rakyat*, PPR, established by farmers' rights activists), the National Liberty Union Party (*Partai Persatuan Pembebasan Nasional*, Papernas, established by farmers' rights, labour and student activists), the Peoples' Opposition Alliance Party (*Partai Persatuan Oposisi Rakyat*, POPOR, established by former members of the Democratic People's Party), and the Green Party of Indonesia (*Partai Hijau Indonesia*, PHI, established by WALHI). For different reasons, these initiatives failed to fulfil the criteria for party formation and could not contest the elections. For further discussion of PPR and its experiences, see Priyono & Nur (2009). This relates to rules that regulate the establishment of new parties, which is very expensive. For instance, a new party has to have branches in half of all the provinces in Indonesia. Within these provinces, there must be branches in half of the cities/districts. In essence, the Indonesian party system, by design, attempts to strictly limit the number of parties.

global context, this trend is also seen in numerous post-authoritarian nations, where it has been deemed 'institutional activism' (Afiff & Rachman 2019).

However, such shifts have yet to be discussed extensively in the context of democratisation. Evaluations of Indonesia's democracy since the 2009 election have generally focused on the behaviour of members of the political elite. In fact, there have been many political initiatives taken by civil society activists. It is thus unsurprising that previous studies of elites have focused only on the implications of the efforts on the part of elite individuals to restore their privileges through corrupt, monopolistic and oligarchic means, and that such studies have therefore concluded that Indonesia's democracy is stagnating (Mietzner 2012) and even regressing (Power & Warburton 2020). As long ago as 2014, Priyono & Hamid edited a thick anthology of articles emphasising the need to rethink and restore Indonesian democracy, going beyond an analysis of the behaviour of members of the elite and their oligarchic interests.

Unlike such analyses, this study focuses on civil society within the context of Indonesia's democratisation since 1998. It shows that interactions between CSOs and the state have gone in both directions, with activists' initiatives influencing the democratisation process even as their activities are affected by developments of democracy. In this context, three troubling phenomena can be identified: fragmentation, civil society being used as a shortcut to politics, and contestation and competition between activists. These will be discussed in detail below.

The Fragmentation of Civil Society

CSOs in Indonesia post-Soeharto are diverse in terms of the issues they focus on. An important factor that has contributed to the proliferation of CSOs in various sectors is the arrival of international donor agencies with an interest in being involved in the process of consolidating Indonesia's fledgling democracy. They offer the design of programmes of activities and policies to 'democratise' post-authoritarian Indonesia.

International donors have been oriented towards reform and have supported the setting up of new rules and regulations to promote the sustainability of reform. The reliance of Indonesian CSOs on international donors has been noted, for instance, by Antlöv, Brinkerhoff & Rapp (2010), who write that the power of international donors in the early post-authoritarian era enabled CSOs to ally

themselves with the legislature through the Coalition for Free Access to Public Information (*Koalisi untuk Kebebasan Akses Informasi Publik*, KUKAIP), and with the Ministry of Domestic Affairs through the Forum for Advancing Public Participation (*Forum Pengembangan Partisipasi Masyarakat*, FPPM) and the Forum for Advancing Rural Reform (*Forum Pengembangan Pembaharuan Desa*, FPPD). The importance of foreign donors in the development of Indonesian civil society is inextricably linked with the Indonesian government's limited support for/facilitation of CSOs, as well as the difficulty experienced by CSOs in accessing the private sector. Given this context, CSOs have needed access to external support from international donors to ensure their continued survival.

At the same time, however, the reliance of CSOs on international donors has ultimately created significant issues. Where CSOs receive foreign support, they must prioritise their donors' interests and agendas in their own activities. Thus, although their specific activities may vary, it is inevitable that CSOs become involved in promoting international issues and agendas, rather than responding to urgent issues at the local and domestic level, which may differ from the agendas of their donors. Such CSOs thus act as extensions of their foreign donors (Hudock 1999). When donor interest wanes, this has a direct impact on the activities of civil society organisations in the sectors in which they are working.

When they focus on specific issues, CSOs become fragmented, a situation recognised not only by the 2003 and 2007 assessments conducted by Demos and UiO, but also by a subsequent study conducted by UGM and UiO through the Power, Welfare and Democracy (PWD) project.[7] In all of these assessments, CSOs and their activists were found to prioritise temporary sectoral issues over more strategic and ideological ones (Priyono, Samadhi & Törnquist 2007; Samadhi & Warouw 2009; Savirani & Törnquist 2015), due to the need to be accountable to donor organisations. Consequently, no shared agenda could successfully unite CSOs in a broader democratisation project.

This sectoral fragmentation helps explain the creation of diverse fields (or subfields) within civil society. CSO activists work not only within their specific sectors, but also interact and deal with different actors within the state and private sectors; interactions between CSOs in different fields, conversely, are rare. As they have lacked a shared agenda, there has been no shared field, and no common ground, wherein CSOs could congregate and unite.

7 Two studies were conducted by Demos-UiO. A similar assessment was subsequently conducted by UGM-UiO under the Power, Welfare and Democracy Project (2011–2016).

At the same time, it is interesting to note that the above-mentioned assessments found that the sectors that dominate Indonesia's democratisation have shifted significantly over time. Fourteen sectors were identified as the predominant drivers of democratisation during the first assessment conducted by Demos and UiO in 2003.[8] These sectors were different from those identified in the second (conducted by Demos and UiO in 2007) and third assessments (conducted by Demos and UGM in 2013). Some subfields have endured over time, while others have been created through the amalgamation (party and electoral) or expansion (from professionalism to business and industry, and from sustainable development to ecology, environment and natural resources) of existing sub-sectors; others are entirely new (public education, health services and security sector reform). The emergence of the subfields of public education and of public health services in 2013 is explained by Savirani & Törnquist (2015) as an indication of increasing public awareness of welfare issues. This indicates a shift in the configuration of the fields (subfields) in civil society. This continuing evolution is indicative of three phenomena: first, CSOs becoming increasingly fragmented and divided between subfields; second, the amalgamation of CSOs and the work of activists involved in the electoral sector; third, the rise of new subfields whose scope is increasingly narrow. The last two phenomena are, it would appear, intrinsically linked with the programmes of international donor institutions.

However, there have nevertheless been opportunities to push a common agenda. There are several traces of the movement built from interactions across subfields under the umbrella of a common agenda. One example is the campaign against efforts to weaken the KPK, beginning with the 'Gecko vs. Crocodile' case in 2009 (this refers to a metaphor in which a weak institution such as KPK is conceived of as a gecko that fights a powerful institution, the national police, which is conceived of as a crocodile). Another example of interaction between civil society organisations across subfields to work on a common agenda was the 'anti-rotten-politician' movement, which brought together activists to campaign for a call to voters not to vote for politicians with a bad track record in the 2004 elections. However, the emergence of

8 The fourteen sectors are: peasants and agricultural labour; the labour movement; the urban poor; human rights; anti-corruption; party reform; pluralism and religious and ethnic reconciliation; democratisation of education; professionalism; freedom, independence and quality of media; gender equality; interest-based mass organisations; alternative representation at the local level; party-building.

movements with a common agenda only seems to occur on certain issues and events, such as anti-corruption or issues related to elections, and is ad-hoc in nature. Human rights issues (e.g. the case of the 2004 murder of activist Munir and other human rights violations) and environmental and agrarian conflicts involving business (e.g. the Kendeng farmer case versus PT Semen Indonesia), and even labour issues, almost never unite activists from different sectors to take collective action with a long-term strategic agenda.

The configuration of prominent subfields has changed post-1998. When compared to the previous period, the shift is quite significant. As mentioned in the previous section, in 1997 Uhlin identified sectors of civil society working for human rights, legal aid, gender equality and 'lower class' politics, namely the movement to defend the rights of workers and farmers as a prominent subfields in the years leading up to the fall of the New Order.

Here it is important to note the significance of the impact of political decentralisation and regional autonomy on civil society (see Chapter 8). The shifts in the configuration of prominent subfields in the post-1998 period cannot be separated from the influence of the two policies in the development of Indonesian democracy since 2005. Decentralisation and regional autonomy have opened up new political spaces for civil society as well as bringing new challenges that confront civil society in gaining influence over policy in the regions. At the same time, however, the experience of regional CSOs sheds light on the opportunities available to them in a context where members of the political elite are constantly seeking electoral advantages, including by sporadically embracing reformist policies (Savirani 2018). These opportunities and challenges paved the way for civil society at the local level to have direct contacts with international donor agencies. As a result, there are variations in subfields between regions, and new trends in civil society movements have been promoted, which have no longer been based on organisation but have been community-based, especially at the local level (see Chapter 5 and 8).

A Shortcut into Politics

Since the fall of the New Order, civil society in Indonesia has contributed significantly to the country's transition to democracy, and this in turn has affected the focus and orientation of CSOs. Before 1998, such organisations were oriented towards democratisation, promoting reform in Indonesia's authoritarian government. Today, with greater openness in public and political

spaces, CSOs seek to reinforce democracy by filling available positions. Such a shift is not, however, an entirely positive development. Antlöv, Brinkerhoff & Rapp (2010) note that as civil society organisations – once marginalised – have become increasingly important, they have been increasingly recognised by government officials, private sector actors and international institutions. Indeed, since 1998 Indonesian civil society has become an important node in relations between these actors.

As a result of increased freedom and openness in the country since 1998, civil society in Indonesia has displayed two major tendencies. First, there has been increased interaction between civil society activists and political institutions. Second, civil society activists have increasingly entered political spaces and contested political positions as a means of stimulating change, particularly since the 2004 election. This does not necessarily mean that the activists become members of political parties or establish new parties (which is indeed difficult for them to do); rather, it means that through contact with and lobbying of political figures they have attempted to influence policy agendas in parliament (such as gender, migrant workers, children's rights, etc.) and have become involved in initiating draft bills. The greater freedom in post-authoritarian Indonesia has enabled civil society activists to work passionately towards becoming agents of change, a situation far removed from the repressive atmosphere created by the New Order regime (even though some liberties were made available in the last decade of the New Order).

Initially, the increased openness of Indonesia's political spaces did not interest individual civil society activists, who viewed political activity – especially in the state field – as taboo. There is however a spectrum here. Many remained idealists, truly believing that civil society movements must exist outside of and separate from the state. They remain outside the political field, but aim to influence politicians indirectly through advocacy. Over time, however, the political openness attracted the interests of CSOs, giving rise to two new breeds of activists. The first worked closely with political parties and populist politicians, thereby associating with important actors, influencing public discourses, and expanding their social networks. The second, meanwhile, focused on advocacy and lobbying politicians and the administration regarding specific and distinct issues, mostly related to economic rights (Priyono, Samadhi & Törnquist 2007; Hiariej & Stokke [eds] 2017). Nevertheless, some of these activists continued to dismiss

formal politics, seeing it as an inappropriate approach for civil society. In the agrarian sector, for example, the decision of some activists to enter formal politics drew significant debate. Such a situation was reminiscent of the early years of the New Order regime, when activists debated whether they should support developmentalism or establish an independent framework to promote social transformation.

It should be borne in mind that the decision to enter the state and become involved in practical politics on the part of activists is not new. As discussed above, Indonesian civil society has a long history of political activism. However, the situation in post-authoritarian Indonesia has been quite different from that in the early years after independence. In the 1950s and 1960s, political activities on the part of civil society organisations received broad popular support, a logical consequence of the increased linkages between CSOs and political organisations. After 1998, conversely, civil society has lacked such social support, as the New Order regime had eroded popular support for decades. Civil society activists have been left floating (Priyono, Samadhi & Törnquist 2007).

Without popular support, civil society activists cannot readily achieve their goal of influencing the democratic processes. Political organisations such as political parties have little interest in networking with CSOs; such linkages are perceived as providing them with little political benefit. In this context, some activists have chosen to enter the political and state fields individually, without any organisational support. Civil society is sharply divided regarding the urgency of accessing and utilising political spaces, and as such institutional mechanisms cannot be readily employed. It is thus as individuals that civil society activists have entered the political and state fields. They can, then, be said to have used civil society as a shortcut to politics (Samadhi & Warouw 2009).

It is important to note that it is only a small number of individuals who have utilised this shortcut. Very few civil society activists have the capacity to become involved in electoral politics or to influence policy process in the context of practical politics. The individuals who possess these abilities are those who have already become recognised as civil society elite actors. Such activists not only possess extensive knowledge capital, obtained through formal education and worldly experience, but also established networks with donor institutions – and, thus, access to economic resources. This context will guide our understanding of the case studies discussed in this book.

Elite Competition

Amidst the fragmentation and competition that have characterised civil society in recent years, few CSO activists have had the opportunity to take a role in society or had the capacity to access contested resources. Of those activists who have had the opportunity, many have been active since the New Order, and are thus recognised for their leadership and experience. Such activists have become influential figures, both in their interactions with donor institutions and in their efforts to influence political processes. As a result, they can access the support and financial resources necessary for success. Further legitimising their positions as 'representatives' of civil society is media coverage, in which they are presented as experts; indeed, many have accumulated significant knowledge and information, be it through higher education or sectoral experiences (Priyono, Samadhi & Törnquist 2007; Samadhi & Warouw 2009; Savirani & Törnquist 2015; Samadhi 2016).

Studies have shown tangible shortcomings in activists' social and economic resources. However, it should be noted that these shortcomings apply mainly to those who are not elite actors. Elite activists have significant cultural resources – knowledge and education – and are able to orient themselves effectively towards accessing donor programmes and contesting political positions. While they have more limited access to economic resources, elite actors profit from their involvement in donor programmes and practical politics; this ultimately mitigates the effects of their limited access to economic resources.

Civil society elite actors who benefit from their use of their elite position come to be increasingly distanced from their support base, just as happens with ordinary politicians. Their focus on practical politics requires money, and their elite position enables them to be co-opted by oligarchic structures which provide access to money (Hiariej 2017: 108). Over time, this expands beyond individual actors, reaching the organisational level, and civil society organisations becomes urban-based and centralistic, without organisational skills or a shared ideology (Antlöv, Ibrahim & van Tuijl 2006).

Indonesia's open political setting and the continued influence of donor institutions have both benefited civil society elite actors, and this has further contributed to the 'elitisation' process. The open space allows some activists, mostly those who are in leading positions, to have more opportunities to be present in public spaces and gain popularity. This is useful for establishing contacts with donor agencies, which not only provide programmes and funds, but

also access to higher education. In turn, this has an impact on the development of an elitist perspective based on the accumulation of new knowledge and on networking among themselves. In civil society activists' efforts to gain elite status, their ability to network with donors is an important resource.

Although CSO activists have not become entirely ineffectual, their ability to become agents of change has been limited. Activists who become active in political spaces are trapped in a situation that co-opts them, wherein they promote the agendas of donors in return for continued access to support. Without foreign support, activists can take little political action, as they lack the necessary social and economic resources to establish and mobilise a movement. Meanwhile, activists who continue to rely on earlier models – i.e. providing non-political guidance to communities – receive neither political nor donor support.

Civil Society and Challenges to Democracy: Conclusion

From its beginning Indonesian civil society has been inseparable from the influence of the ongoing political situation. Its development has always been directed by the response of its activists to political dynamics. In the early or pre-independence phase, this interaction created a strong impression of civil society as an important element in the nation-building process and the achievement of independence. After independence and until the mid-1960s, competition between political forces shaped civil society as highly politicised and rooted in social action. The situation then changed quite drastically in the New Order era, when civil society actually experienced de-politicisation as a result of Soeharto's repressive political policies. Until the 1980s, the hegemony of the developmentalism scenario distanced Indonesian civil society from any attempt to seek alternative initiatives to carry out social transformation. It was only after the third wave of democratisation, which reached Indonesia in the 1980s, that civil society activists supported by international networks began to campaign on issues of democracy and human rights. This situation was also influenced by the waning of the government's authoritarian political power. Finally, at the end of the 1990s, civil society activists had ample political opportunities after Indonesia entered the era of democratisation, and were often regarded as pro-democracy forces.

However, the third wave of democratisation has been challenged by a third wave of autocratisation. Democracy is being threatened in countries around

the world, often by actors seeking to establish an autocratic regime; Indonesia is no exception. After more than 20 years, Indonesia's 'reform' has exhibited similar tendencies. This may be attributed, in part, to the ongoing elitism and elitisation within CSOs and amongst activists, who have not successfully transformed themselves into agents of democratic change.

The severity of the threat to Indonesian democracy has been perceived variously. Scholars have variously identified the country's political system as an oligarchic democracy, an elitist democracy, a stagnant democracy, and even a regressive democracy. Robison and Hadiz (2004), Priyono, Samadhi & Törnquist (2007) and Winters (2011), for example, have all explored the oligarchy's monopolisation and domination of Indonesia's democracy. Mietzner (2012) similarly writes that Indonesian democracy has stagnated, supporting this argument by referring to ongoing elite contestation and the country's increasingly closed political system. CSOs and other alternative groups have limited access to practical politics, and elections have been tainted by the widespread practice of money politics (Aspinall & Sukmajati 2015). This has led to concerns about an 'illiberal turn' (Mietzner 2018; Diprose, McRae & Hadiz 2019) and Warburton & Aspinall (2019) and Power & Warburton (2020) have argued that Indonesia's democracy is experiencing regression.

At the same time, however, these problems cannot be attributed solely to the manipulative behaviour of members of the political elite. Samadhi & Warouw (2009) and Samadhi (2016) have shown that pro-democracy activists, including civil society elite actors who have attempted to directly influence politics by entering the state arena, have neither the necessary political capacity nor a common and solid democracy agenda. Consequently, when these civil society elite actors face the conservative political elite, they find themselves unable to win.

After more than 20 years, civil society organisations have failed in their efforts to transform themselves into institutions of popular representation. This can be attributed to the significant sectoralism of these movements, which limits their ability to consolidate and collaborate; for example, youth-based movements have had difficulty working with resource-oriented ones, even when consolidation has happened. This may be illustrated using the case of the Action Coalition for Social Insurance. Although in 2011 it successfully promoted the passage of Law No. 24 of 2011 regarding the Social Security Agency (necessary to implement Law No. 40 of 2004 regarding the National Social Insurance System), this coalition of labour, urban poor and informal

sector activists has stagnated amidst transactionalism and populist politics (Savirani & Törnquist 2015; Djani et al. 2017). Civil society activists are having difficulty dealing with this situation, partly because there is no shared field wherein they can promote democratisation, and partly because Indonesia's political structures are becoming increasingly autocratic.

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PART 2

ELITE FORMATION IN CIVIL SOCIETY

CHAPTER 5

Youth Activism and Elite Reproduction in Cambodia and Indonesia

Astrid Norén-Nilsson
Amalinda Savirani

Youth activism has the potential to play a pivotal role in social and political change in Cambodia and Indonesia, both countries where young people make up a key demographic group. In the Cambodian national elections in 2018, more than 46% of all registered voters were aged between 18 and 35 (Deutsche Welle 2018). In the 2019 election in Indonesia, meanwhile, more than 37.7% of all voters were aged 17–35. This segment of the population has unique characteristics. Millennials and Gen Z youth, just about to start adult life, may enjoy relative freedom compared to older generations in terms of their familial and financial obligations. As a newly emerged key constituency in elections and as a demographic cross-culturally associated with activism, the youth block is a politically significant group. This generation will define the future of civil society in both countries. At the same time, however, what they can achieve through civil society is affected by who takes on leadership in the first place. Patterns of elite formation in youth civil society have significance for the social and political roles played by the field.

This chapter explores elite formation in the Cambodian and Indonesian youth civil society field, focusing on examples of youth-led, university-rooted initiatives. These initiatives have in common the fact that their leaders are either current or former student activists, and that they primarily target educated urban youth. These initiatives are not formal CSOs but constitute different forms of relatively ad-hoc communities. The percentage of young people going on to higher education has increased sharply in Cambodia, but remained at 11.6% of 18–22-year-olds for the academic year 2017/18 (Mo-

EYS 2019: 79). In Indonesia, only 2.6% of the population enters university. The elite individuals we discuss here are therefore elite in multiple senses; they are not only members of the civil society elite, but also sociologically elite, as they are urban, new or established middle-class youths who are also university graduates.

We argue that in both Indonesia and Cambodia 'critical thinking' has been a crucial agenda for youth empowerment, which has been promoted by various actors: both the self-organising youths themselves and members of the political elite connected to the state. We thus use the promotion of critical thinking as a vantage point to analyse elite formation among youth activists in the two countries. At the same time, we identify competing agendas of 'critical thinking', informed both by regime type – authoritarian in Cambodian, democratic in Indonesia – and the plurality of interests among elite activists. These different agendas affect the value and convertibility of capital needed by young people to become members of the civil society elite, as well as the patterns of inter-field interactions in relation to elite formation.

To investigate how youth activists have emerged as elite actors in Indonesia and Cambodia, we proceed as follows. We first compare the types of capital employed by activists to reach elite status. We then consider the role of interaction between these activists and elite individuals in other fields. This analysis relies on case studies of two youth civil society organisations in each country, namely Ininnawa and Ketjilbergerak in Indonesia; and Perspectives Cambodia (PC) and Politikoffee in Cambodia. Data were collected through interviews, observations and document analysis between September 2018 and October 2019; additional interview data was gathered at a later stage. During field work, 24 semi-structured interviews were conducted in Cambodia, and 15 in Indonesia, as well as two focus group discussions with leaders and ordinary organisation members. Questions focused on the themes of elite formation and elite interaction.

Youth in Cambodia and Indonesia

Young people make up a sizeable proportion of Cambodia's population. In 2017, 33% of the Cambodian population was between the ages of 16 and 30 (Eng et al. 2019:1). This generation, representing the post-war baby boom of the 1980s and 1990s, is set apart from older generations in a multitude of ways. Politically, they grew up with peace and stability, multi-party elections, as

well as economic growth. Lacking memories of the murderous Khmer Rouge regime, they do not share the gratitude of many in their parents' generation towards the ruling Cambodian People's Party (CPP) – in power in different incarnations ever since 1979 – for toppling it. They are also marginalised from political and economic resources, particularly through their lack of integration into the patron–client networks that are central to relationships with authorities, and thus experience alienation (Eng & Hughes 2017: 405).

The political significance of the young people of Cambodia became apparent in the country's 2013 national elections, when many became eligible to vote for the first time and made up the majority of the electorate (Eng & Hughes 2017: 396). Young people took on an increasingly important political role, and on both sides, the CPP and the newly formed opposition Cambodia National Rescue Party, large-scale youth mobilisation took place before and after the election. With the election results showing dramatically dwindling support for the CPP, the party launched new strategies to co-opt youth. One significant component of its strategies has been the promotion of mass organisations, which focus on purportedly non-political activities of a humanitarian, cultural and social nature (Norén-Nilsson 2021). Particularly visible has been the increasing role played by the Union of Youth Federations of Cambodia (UYFC), which defines itself as an NGO but functions as an unofficial youth branch of the CPP.

In tandem, politics has become a taboo topic at universities. A 2015 directive of the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports (MoEYS) forbids students to discuss politics at schools and universities. Nevertheless, university campuses are a base for networks of state-sponsored mass organisations with close ties to the CPP, including the UYFC, the Cambodia Scouts and the Cambodian Red Cross. Their activities are typically focused on capacity-building and humanitarian activities, and they promote a depoliticising ethos of jointly solving problems for the good of the nation. Campuses also generate independent initiatives for political discussion and critical thinking, which, though not housed on campus, are based on networks formed on campus. Several of these originated just before or after the 2013 election. Some were created by the high-profile political analyst Kem Ley, who was murdered in 2016 (Norén-Nilsson 2019). These include the Young Analyst Group, a political analysis team that focuses on media commentary, and the Khmer Intellectual Students Union Association, which identifies as a research institute and focuses on producing reports on political and social issues critical

of the government. There are also Phnom Penh-based initiatives, such as savings groups, which house regular forums for political discussion among like-minded young people. The range of organisational forms reflects the difficulty of organising a space for political discussion for young people under the authoritarian government. These initiatives also share in common a stated desire to transform the current political culture into a more democratic one, based on critical thinking and rooted in evidence-based research. The focus on research and logical reasoning by these independent youth initiatives both stems from security concerns, with criticism and side-taking being too risky, and also reflects the belief that facts and evidence can improve the political culture of Cambodia.

In Indonesia, young people – particularly university students – have played a significant role in the country's history through their 'moral force'. Young people have been part of all of the political transitions in the country, and were part of the opposition during the Soeharto era (Aspinall 2012). Under President Soeharto, university students were perceived to be critical forces, and were therefore heavily controlled. Campus activities were closely monitored through the 'campus life normalisation' (NKK/BKK) policy. Students responded to this restriction by establishing many 'study groups', small reading and discussion groups designed mainly to promote critical thinking, particularly in challenging the dominant values of the New Order (Raillon 1985). Nevertheless, youth organisations are plural in Indonesia, encompassing former state–corporatist organisations established during the New Order, religious-based youth organisations (for instance, Anshor and Muhammadiyah Youth Union or IPM, respectively part of Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah), party-affiliated youth groups, extracurricular university organisations (HMI, GMNI, PMKRI, GMKI), state-sponsored youth organisations that survived the transition from the New Order era, and even paramilitary youth organisations such as Pemuda Pancasila ('Pancasila Youth'). This paper focuses on youth-initiated organisations that emerged after the fall of the New Order regime.

After graduating, many former student activists continue using the networks that they forged during their student activities, including their networks with NGOs. For their part, NGOs need students to be part of their activities, particularly in their advocacy on development issues (Aspinall 2005:122). For example, the founders of Ininnawa – one of the case studies in this chapter – were students at Hasanuddin University in Makassar around this

time. The Indonesian Legal Aid Foundation runs a programme in which law students act as pro bono public lawyers for marginalised groups, and they are mostly former student activists. In the political field, meanwhile, many student activists active during the fall of the New Order were recruited by Golkar, the ruling party at that time, and became politicians. The same recruitment took place in the post-Soeharto era on the part of other parties besides Golkar. Thus, youth activists (from campus-based initiatives or otherwise) became human resources in the world of civil society and political parties, thereby becoming either civil society activists or politicians (Mietzner 2013).

To sum up, the different political histories and current regime types of the two countries have resulted in divergent patterns of youth initiatives. In authoritarian Cambodia, youth activities are closely monitored by the regime. On the other hand, in democratic post-Soeharto Indonesia, university students continue to play a role as a 'moral force' vis-à-vis the regime. They distance themselves from political parties and the state, and together with critical NGOs continue to act as an independent opposition force, although this has changed slightly over the past few years, as many university-graduated youths and former organisation members have entered the networks of political parties, sought to secure political positions, and become part of the state field. These countries also differ in the degree of politicisation of youth organisations. In Cambodia, the ruling CPP has co-opted students through mass organisations such as the UYFC, which mobilises young people, mainly through social and cultural activities that aim to distance them from politics. Independent initiatives, meanwhile, have emerged as heavily politicised and geared towards questions of national political development. Campus activism has been integrated into overall civil society.

Critical thinking stands for different agendas in these two contexts. In Indonesia, critical thinking is understood as being critical towards dominant values, including political values, and has been widely promoted to support students' political activities, both during the Soeharto era and in the post-Soeharto era. In Cambodia, whilst independent student activism similarly seeks to change political culture through critical thinking, the depoliticising mass organisations tied to the CPP also capitalise on this notion for their own problem-solving rationale.

Introduction to the Case Studies

The Cambodian case studies exemplify the two different patterns of critical thinking in student activism that were identified above. Perspectives Cam-

bodia (PC) describes itself as a new social platform, centred on a debate and public speaking contest for Grade 12 and university students. It was founded in 2017 by six young but relatively established elite individuals, in different sectors. Originating at the renowned Paññāsāstra University (PUC) in Phnom Penh and conducted in partnership with the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports (MoEYS), the contest has been held at various universities around Phnom Penh. Although PC claims to be an independent initiative, UYFC – which functions as an unofficial youth branch of the CPP – has been closely involved in the contest.

The rationale of the programme is to encourage young people to be part of the solution to societal problems. An internal project document states that 'Technological advancement and freedom, such as social media, has empowered young Cambodians to speak their minds and give opinions and judgments. […] the dark side of this is [a] lack of critical thinking and moral responsibility. […] In response to the social problems raised above, 'Perspectives Cambodia is intended to be a new social platform where different perspectives are expressed thoughtfully and respectfully. [Perspectives Cambodia] would help create voices to promote further public understanding of various social and country's issues [sic], reflect on the practice [sic] and policymaking, and embracing a culture of dialogues. These are expected to contribute to solving the problems faced today in this country' (Perspectives Cambodia, n.d.). The initiative is thus intended to reframe the thinking of the young to focus it on managerial problem-solving rather than contestation, and to deflect criticism from the government by placing the burden of responsibility on young people themselves. Potential topics for debate are suggested by mentors and discussed at length. It is the executive board that approves the topics, with one of the co-founders having a particular say.

Meanwhile, Politikoffee is an informal weekly political discussion forum for young people. Established in 2011 by a group of four friends and university graduates, the forum had over 2,500 participants by 2020; 400 of these were regular attendees. Many were students. Meeting at first in coffee shops around Phnom Penh, Politikoffee was then offered a meeting space, first by the Cambodian Center for Human Rights (CCHR) and then by the Germany-based political foundation Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS). Politikoffee is independent, but treated with some suspicion by the government, and it decided to suspend its activities for several months as authoritarianism hardened in September 2017. The forum has received much media attention,

Figure 5.1 Politikoffee forum (courtesy Collection of Politikoffee). **Colour**, p. 262.

and key members have come to be seen as speaking for their generation, and are consulted by international media, international organisations and the foreign diplomatic community.

The purpose of Politikoffee is to cultivate a democratic political culture. According to one of the co-founders, he had the idea to set up the forum because he found political discussion and dialogue between young people to be absent in Cambodia. Politikoffee is intended to help young people speak and discuss politics, thereby enabling them to learn about politics and history while simultaneously creating new networks and promoting a pro-democratic, plural political culture. This agenda harks back to a vision that, according to the aforementioned co-founder, is shared by all of the core members of Politikoffee: to have political evolution, rather than revolution. In each forum, an invited speaker (academic, public intellectual, civil society worker, diplomat, government official, etc.) is asked to discuss a given topic on which they have expertise. Forum participants are then encouraged to ask questions and engage in dialogue. The agenda of discussion is determined by the core members of Politikoffee, with one of the co-founders having a particular say.

The case studies from Indonesia focus on two civil society organisations that were initiated by young people: Ininnawa in Makassar, South Sulawesi, and Ketjilbergerak in Yogyakarta. Ininnawa started activities in 2002 as a reading club that promoted literacy and critical thinking among members. As mentioned above, during the New Order, similar student groups often used reading and discussion groups to develop critical thinking as a compromise strategy for dealing with the oppressive regime. Ketjilbergerak, meanwhile, was founded in

2006 by Greg Sindana and Invani Lela Herliana – two graduates of Santa Dharma University. The two organisations began, thus, in different political climates.

Ininnawa is an umbrella organisation that consists of five sub-organisations focusing respectively on literacy (Katakerja), village development (Payo-Payo), agricultural research (Tanete Institute), organisation education and training (Active Society Institute/AcSI) and publication (Ininnawa Publishing). Ketjilbergerak initially focused on urban issues, particularly those related to urban young people, but later expanded its scope to cover issues experienced by rural young people. Members employ various forms of art, such as street art, music, theatre, and poetry, as instruments to convey their critical message. Their messages are mostly critical of the expansive urban development of Yogyajakarta, which has marginalised the urban poor. In their campaigns, they often utilise social media platforms, such as YouTube, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

Ininnawa is very critical of three elements of local culture: patriarchy, materialism and class inequality. They note, for example, that university graduates are more appreciated than persons without such an education, and that certain faculties (such as medicine) are culturally regarded as more prestigious (focus group discussion, Makassar, 18 April 2019). They also criticise the subordination of women, including the expectation that wives should obey their husbands. As a result of such cultural biases, many of the parents of Ininnawa activists expect them to find employment at government offices, rather than to continue working as CSO activists. Female activists often have to resign once they get married. To cultivate critical thinking, through Katakerja Ininnawa runs a public library located at the largest campus in South Sulawasi, Universitas Hasanuddin, to encourage the habit of reading among students and the general public (Interview with Aan Mansyur, April 2019). Katakerja runs many activities, such as book launches and discussions on contemporary issues, which they invite students to attend. Ininnawa publishing has promoted the habit of reading among young people in Makassar through similar activities (Interview with Jimpe Rachman, April 2021).

Ketjilbergerak is a community of young people concerned about other young people, rather than a formal organisation registered at the Ministry of Home Affairs (as required by law). Participants are young people, mostly between the ages of 15 and 25, and volunteers; 80% are from a lower middle class background. 'At this age, young people have great energy to change things, but still have to learn about organising their ideas' (Invani, focus group

Figure 5.2 Ketjilbergerak members using art as a medium for activism (courtesy Collection of Ketjilbergerak). **Colour**, p. 262.

discussion, 21 November 2019). As a consequence of its community status, Ketjilbergerak may not collaborate with or receive funding from international donor organisations or other external parties. Any collaborative initiatives supported by external resources must use ad-hoc committees (event organisers), which are separate entities. For activities that are not supported by external sources, Ketjilbergerak raises funds by selling merchandise such as t-shirts that have been designed by members.

To promote critical thinking, Ketjilbergerak runs many programmes, including a so-called 'class for daydreaming' (*Kelas Melamun*), which encourages participants to think about topics that are not learnt at school but are of personal interest. The idea is to create a separate learning space from that of school, where students are told by their teachers what to learn. Other informal courses have been called 'schools', such as Sekolah Kota (Urban School) and Sekolah Pemuda Desa (Rural School for Young People). These programmes are designed to help young people to become socially attached to their community, to improve their technological literacy, or to solve the everyday problems that they face.

To sum up, the case studies taken from Cambodia and Indonesia are youth-initiated and youth-led initiatives that engage students. They promote

critical thinking as a method to engage with participants, though with different purposes and aims. For the Cambodian case studies, critical thinking focuses on national-level political and social issues. Perspectives Cambodia seeks to contribute solutions to national problems, while Politikoffee aims to provide a discussion forum aiming to transform the political culture of Cambodia and to forge networks between engaged young people. For the Indonesian case studies, critical thinking focuses on challenging dominant values and being critical of local development. Ininnawa and Ketjilbergerak criticise local culture that prevents young people from growing independently in Makassar and massive urban development projects in Yogyakarta, respectively. Their organisational structure is rather flexible, and they tend to be egalitarian.

Elite Formation: The Mobilisation of Capital

Across all of our case studies, the processes of elite formation are primarily informal, with founders being particularly important in their respective initiatives. Leadership often evolves according to a generational pattern, with subsequent groups of leaders taking over in due course, while maintaining close relations with the founders. From these ranks, elite activists have emerged who have influence within certain issue areas, either within civil society or in society more broadly. Across the cases, leaders and members were not comfortable with the term 'elite', stressing instead their non-hierarchical, critical thinking-building ambitions.

Generation Matters

Members of Politikoffee are defined as those who regularly join the weekly discussion forum. Since it is open to the public, membership is open to anyone. Given the high profile and visibility of the forum, participation in itself can be understood as a social marker of engagement and critical thinking. Among Politikoffee members, there is a leadership structure made up of five generations of core members. The first generation consists of the four co-founders, who started Politikoffee in 2011; the second generation consists of sixteen core members, recruited around 2014; the third and fourth generations consist of four core members each, recruited in 2018 and 2020 respectively; and the fifth generation consists of six core members, announced in 2022. While both genders are present in all generations, the third generation is identified

as particularly 'feminist', with high-profile young women as its driving force. Recruitment to core membership is informal, and generally by consensus rather than election.

At any given time, it is the current generation of core members that takes the lead in the running of the forum, in consultation with the first generation of co-founders. This level confers decision-making capacity, for example on the contents of the forum. While during the second generation each core member had her/his own area of responsibility, many decisions have since been made by consensus. However, core membership is not particularly publicised, and some members are not even aware of it.

Founders hold a particular status. One co-founder of Politikoffee, Ou Ritthy, has emerged as a key civil society actor who is regularly invited to events by international organisations and has regularly been quoted by the media on Cambodian social and political developments, though with the election of subsequent core generations he has delegated media commentary to those he has designated. Ritthy was pointed out by core members as the most significant leader within the forum for several reasons: his influence, as other core members usually listen to his opinion; his activity, in the weekly forum and on Twitter; his social capital, in terms of being well known and having many connections; and his commitment in guiding the young on personal, academic and forum issues. He thus corresponds to our understanding of an elite activist within civil society, because of the significant influence he has, not only over other civil society actors but also within the issue areas in which he engages beyond the realm of civil society.

In Perspectives Cambodia, the six founding members hold dominant positions vis-à-vis other volunteers and contestants. The make up the board, and though they are not involved in the daily running of the programme, they regularly consult with the executive team that manages it. Most have attended the competition. Contestants affectionately refer to the founders as 'father' and 'mother', reflecting the substantial influence the founders exercise, inseparable from the affection and respect they enjoy. This also indicates that PC is more hierarchical than the egalitarian Politikoffee. The six founders held previous elite status in different sectors, including education, economy, health, and culture, before joining together to exercise influence as leading civil society figures through this initiative.

In the case of Indonesia, Ininnawa has been led by three generations since its establishment. The first consisted of the founders (Nurhadi Simorok,

Hasriadi Ari, and Aan Mansyur); Nurhadi is given particular prominence. The second generation consists of Ishak Salim, Karno S. Batiran (Founder of Payo-Payo); and the third consists of Zulhajar, Eka, Asad and Ais Rahman. The founders of Ininnawa match our understanding of civil society elite actors, in that they have significant influence over other civil society actors. They refuse, however, to be called 'elite', as the term assumes a hierarchy, and Ininnawa has not encultured a gap between leaders and followers. Indeed, it has challenged the hierarchical culture of Makassar society, and been particularly vocal on matters of gender inequality.

Meanwhile, in Ketjilbergerak, the founders Greg and Invani are the 'elite'. In line with this book's understanding of civil society elite actors as those who exercise substantial influence within or beyond civil society, Ketjilbergerak defines an 'elite' individual primarily in terms of his or her capacity to connect to diverse social groups. In other words, 'elite' activists are those who can fraternise with young people at the grassroots, collaborate with other civil society organisations, and pitch ideas to donor organisations and government institutions (focus group discussion, 29 January 2019). To execute its activities, Ketjilbergerak recruits a range of volunteers, including high school students, urban young people living in *kampung* (informal settlement in cities), and urban young people in rural villages. To cultivate confidence amongst members, volunteers are at the forefront of Ketjilbergerak's activities. Social capital is also passed to these young volunteers as they connect with Ketjilbergerak's network. For example, during one of Ketjilbergerak's anti-corruption activities, the name and mobile number of one organiser was included on promotional posters, placing this public high school student at the vanguard. So prominent was her placement that she was contacted by a high-profile member of the Corruption Eradication Commission, though she did not answer his call.

Expanding Capital

Across our Cambodian and Indonesian cases, the main forms of capital utilised to reach elite status are social capital and knowledge capital. However, these are generated through different processes. In the Cambodian cases, the key capital is social capital in the form of trust. In Politikoffee, core members identified trust as necessary for appointment. The forum is non-partisan, and different political views are represented among both core members and participants.

However, the government has viewed Politikoffee with suspicion, and there is, therefore, a fear of recruiting a core member who would seek to sabotage the forum. For this reason, the circle of core members has been expanded slowly and informally. Three out of four first-generation core members were alumni of the Department of Media and Communication (DMC) at the Royal University of Phnom Penh, and they recruited second-generation core members from among their social networks. In the third generation, three out of four core members had a DMC connection. Here, it is clear that the joint volume of social capital functions as a 'credential' for each member. Personal acquaintance is not necessary; belonging to similar social circles suffices.

Trust is also paramount in joining and advancing within the framework of Perspectives Cambodia. The networks that generate the 'credentials' that function as social capital are built through youth volunteering activities sponsored by the ruling CPP. Social capital is here therefore indistinguishable from political capital. The six co-founders met when participating in the elite youth exchange Ship for Southeast Asian and Japanese Youth Program (SSEAYP) , organised by the Cabinet Office of Japan and Southeast Asian governments. One of these, Sroy Socheath, who was Director of Campus Administration at Paññāsāstra University of Cambodia (PUC) in Phnom Penh, then invited the President of the PUC Student Senate (PASS), to join in organising the programme. They knew each other not only from PUC, but also from the CPP-sponsored Union of Youth Federations of Cambodia (UYFC). The PASS President then relied on his personal networks for the selection of the executive team, as well as a technical team of nine mentors in debate and public speaking. These networks were mainly forged through youth volunteering in three associations: the Cambodian Red Cross, the Cambodia Scouts, and the UYFC. All of these are patronised by the ruling CPP and enjoy close links with state structures, primarily through the MoEYS. The programme was advertised on Facebook through the personal networks of the founders, and as a result applicants were largely drawn from these networks.

A second form of capital is knowledge capital. In Politikoffee, this centres on taking an interest in political issues. For core members, this is necessary for organising and participating in the forum, since they decide (together with the co-founders) on topics and speakers for forum discussions. When moderating the forum, they typically interact with high profile individuals, including public intellectuals, experts and government officials. Knowledge of the different topics is essential for a successful forum. Also, for the most

prominent co-founder, his skill in political analysis has meant that he is respected and has standing both amongst other core members and within broader civil society.

In Perspectives Cambodia, knowledge capital is the main criterion for becoming a contestant. In the first two seasons, 80 candidates were selected out of 180 and 989 applicants respectively. Applicants were filtered through an exam, which counted for 80% of the assessment and focused on general knowledge on social science topics, including politics, economics, history and culture. While trust thus functions as a gatekeeper for entering the contest, knowledge capital is the main factor allowing a contestant to proceed into the programme. Knowledge capital is also essential for advancement in the programme: the team of contestants does rigorous research to support their debating and/or public speaking position. This involves searching for information from government ministries and NGOs, with contacts mediated by the PC Secretariat. Accumulated knowledge and social capital are thus essential for success in the contest.

In the Indonesian case studies, knowledge is also the main capital of youth-led organisations, and can be understood as symbolic capital. The formation of this non-economic capital takes place while students are at university, when they are involved in many campus activities such as student magazines, street demonstrations and off-campus group discussions. This knowledge is later transformed into social capital through networking with NGO figures, opposition groups and members of the political elite. After members graduate, these networks can be expanded to the national level. For example, Ininnawa has become part of the Yogyakarta-based civil society organisation INSIST, established by the late Mansour Fakih, a respected figure in Indonesian civil society, and his friend Roem Topatimasang. This has enabled Ininnawa to broaden its horizons, expand its networks from the local to the national level, interact with other Indonesian NGOs through the activities of INSIST, and learn from the experiences of other NGOs. Here, knowledge capital has provided the basis for accumulating other types of capital, without which expansion would not have been possible.

For Ketjilbergerak, social capital is built primarily through interactions with Yogyakarta-based artists and NGOs that share a similar agenda as well as city-level leadership. For example, Ketjilbergerak members joined an independent movement organised by the artist community of Yogyakarta to recruit the mayoral candidate for the town in 2013. Such networks have

been facilitated by Ketjilbergerak's strategy of using art as a medium to convey messages to young people, and the fact that the founders had associated with the artists of Yogyakarta since their time as university students. In addition, as few local organisations were dealing with young people, Ketjilbergerak's focus on the young made it unique in Yogyakarta. As young people became increasingly strategic in development programmes, many institutions – both public and private – offered to collaborate with Ketjilbergerak. However, they did not accept offers from the private sector due to their limited capacity (Interview, Invani April 2021). Ketjilbergerak later expanded its networks to state ministries at the national level in Jakarta, and in 2015 it collaborated with the Corruption Eradication Commission for an anti-corruption campaign. On another occasion, it collaborated with the Ministry of Village Development to create the 'Rural School for Young People' programme. Thus it is the movement's focus that has enabled it to expand its networks from the local to the national level.

In summary, the different patterns of youth-led, university-rooted initiatives and their competing paradigms regarding critical thinking have produced two contrasting patterns of elite formation in Cambodia and Indonesia. Across the case studies, founders have played central roles in initiatives, and have at times raised subsequent generations of leaders. In all of the case studies, social capital and knowledge capital have been key for gaining elite status within civil society, as manifested in dominant field positions. There is, however, a difference between Cambodia and Indonesia in terms of how social capital is accumulated. In the Cambodian case studies, social capital has been politicised and generated through networks that may reach outside of civil society. The networks that confer social capital either span the state, as in the case of PC, or alternatively form networks of trust distinguished by their integrity from state oversight, as in the case of Politikoffee. In the Indonesian case studies, meanwhile, social capital is built mainly through networking with civil society organisations, which are often quite critical of the regime, and (particularly for Ketjilbergerak) based on sectoral interests.

Elite Formation: The Role of Elite Interaction and Integration

Across our case studies, interaction and integration between elite actors have played important roles in elite formation. In both Cambodia and Indonesia, civil society elite activists have engaged in interaction and integration with

the state field and with the field of electoral politics, but this dynamic is more pronounced and foundational in Cambodia, where (unlike in Indonesia) it often motivates participation in youth initiatives.

Contestants in PC are presented with networking opportunities with representatives of other fields. To prepare for the contests, contestants are expected to consult relevant institutions. The PC Secretariat prepares letters to introduce the teams to ministries, companies, and NGOs that are within the networks of the executive and management team. Contestants and mentors thus gain privileged access to different stakeholders, including representatives of the state, to discuss political and social issues. During the contest itself, contestants interact with four judges: one from the government, one from the NGO sector and two technical judges. For the final round, the Minister of Education, Youth, and Sports himself has served as a judge. Hun Many, President of the UYFC, and son of PM Hun Sen, has also been present. While connections for some contestants fizzled out, others reported keeping in touch after the contest with high-ranking government officials, private sector actors and NGO leaders.

Another form of interaction is the way in which the programme seeks to influence government policy. In the management team and among contestants, there is a perception that the main purpose of PC is to bring the voices of the young to the government table and to provide solutions. According to the head of the technical team, 'We give the solution to the government, so somehow we hope that we can contribute to the policymaking.' According to PC co-founder Socheath, 'What we have to do is to have a sense, a spirit that we can be involved, we can help. I think young people need to […] feel like they are part of the solution.' According to the co-founders, policymakers regularly watch the debate through the MoEYS or PC Facebook pages, where the competition is broadcast live. Members of the UYFC network also share posts on their individual timelines, thereby increasing reach.

Many contestants interviewed see internal networking as the main benefit of belonging to the PC, viewing the organisation as forming a community, a self-described 'family' in which the founders are referred to as 'father' and 'mother'. This is consistent with the founders' ambition, which is to create a close-knit community of young people who are capable of taking leading positions within the economic, civil society and state fields. Though PC is an elite formation in civil society, it is inherently looking to forge connections across fields. In the words of one co-founder: 'Almost all of my children are

now spread out. They work in good companies, NGOs and Ministries, which I am so happy about' (interview with Sroy Socheath, May 2019). The purpose of PC is to generate elite individuals who move beyond civil society – tying together future political, civil society and economic elites.

One of PC's co-founders has converted social capital, the 'credentials' bestowed by membership, into political capital pertaining to policy-making positions. In co-founding the competition, Socheath mobilised the networks that she had built through state-sponsored youth volunteerism. As Director of Campus Administration at the well-known Paññāsāstra University of Cambodia (PUC), she also mobilised her access to university students. She connected with fellow UYFC member and president of Paññāsāstra Student Senate (PASS), who was also the brother of the head of the UYFC volunteers at the MoEYS. The two took leading roles in creating PC. Socheath was rewarded with an appointment as a full-time staff member of UYFC. The Minister of Education, Youth, and Sport then appointed Socheath Director General of Youth, the highest technical-level position in the Ministry, and in this capacity she has (at the request of the Minister) developed a national debate competition modelled on PC. In this case, her access to young people constituted a form of social capital that enabled Socheath to enter the state field and convert her social capital to political capital.

Politikoffee centres on a weekly forum, and the main form of interaction between its members and members of other elites occurs when the latter are invited as speakers. Interactions with government officials have been entirely confined to this format. When authoritarianism hardened in September 2017, Politikoffee suspended its activities for several months. When activities resumed, several government officials were invited as part of a strategy to assuage government suspicions. All of the invited officials agreed to speak, although the core members recalled that these forums were sometimes tense. No core member interviewed reported having established lasting relations with the government through Politikoffee. The overall ambition of the forum is, however, to prepare members to become influential actors beyond civil society – in electoral politics and the state field. According to co-founder Ou Ritthy, the mission of the forum is to develop the critical thinking, public speaking, and analytical skills of young people, thereby cultivating a democratic culture and enabling ambitious young participants to become 'political entrepreneurs' who can enter electoral politics and the state field. When participants believe that they are ready, they may enter careers in political parties or government.

In Ritthy's words, 'I keep telling them, "if you want to be [a] politician, you need to be capable, have the financial resources, enough of a network, good knowledge and skills"' (interview with Ou Ritthy, May 2019). Politikoffee is designed to provide social and knowledge capital – rather than financial capital – which can be converted into political capital. However, this ambition is not accepted by the state. In 2018, Politikoffee applied to the Ministry of Interior to register as an NGO named 'Centre for Political Entrepreneurs'. The application was rejected, and informally the message came through that the word 'political' in the proposed name of the NGO was considered inappropriate. This expressed the state's rejection of boundary-crossing ambitions on the part of Politikoffee on behalf of the young people they had been nurturing.

The influential co-founder of Politikoffee frequently interacts with elite individuals from civil society, international organisations and the diplomatic community. He is a frequent guest at events organised by international organisations and embassies, and has been invited for briefings and consultations by the diplomatic community. He has been consulted by NGOs on the quality of their proposals, and is also highly sought after by the media for political commentary. Ritthy has thus been able to convert his knowledge and social capital into significant political capital as a self-defined 'political entrepreneur'. However, he has never been approached by the government for any briefing or consultation, and has only served as a short-term technical officer for several Ministries. Nevertheless, invitations from international organisations occasionally give him a platform to speak in front of government officials. These interactions have not been meaningful so far: Ritthy recalled in particular how once, invited by the OECD to speak at an event, he was interrupted by a government official who cut him off with the words 'the young should not participate in politics' (interview with Ou Ritthy, May 2019). He does not aspire to cross to the state field or enter electoral politics, precisely because he needs to remain influential *within* civil society in order to fulfil the mission of Politikoffee: to create other boundary-crossers.

The interactions and integration of elite activists within civil society in Indonesia take different forms. In general, civil society actors fall into two categories: those who hold that civil society organisations (including members of their elites) should act strictly as watchdogs, and those who hold that it is good to interact with and integrate into the political field, in order to bring about 'change from within' (see Chapter 7 and Chapter 11). Both Ininnawa and Ketjilbergerak have collaborated with state agencies, but neither has worked

with political parties. Where members do enter practical politics, this is based on their individual motivations.

The interactions of Ininnawa with the political field fall into two categories: through candidacy in local election (via a political party), and through appointment as a member of a team of experts. The first is exemplified by the case of Tomy Satria, the former deputy regent of Bulukumba Regency, while the second can be seen in the cases of Zulhajar (appointed to a team advising the Deputy Governor of South Sulawesi) and Nardi (an official in a village in Soppeng Regency). Tomy Satria, who was part of Ininnawa in its formative years, has since become involved in politics via the National Democratic Party. In 2015, he was elected Deputy Regent of Bulukumba. Bulukumba is his hometown, and thus his electoral success could be attributed in part to his family networks (Interview, Tomy Satria, April 2019). However, in December 2020 he ran unsuccessfully for the position of Regent.

The involvement of Ininnawa members in politics has had the tangible impact of increasing its social capital. For example, a member named Ishak Salim has since established his own NGO to advocate for disability groups, which is called Perdik. It is in this capacity that, during the tenure of Tomy Satria, he collaborated with the Bulukumba Regency government to develop the 'inclusive village' programme, to raise public awareness of groups with disabilities. This initiative gained national recognition (Nilawaty 2020). One of the sub-organisations of Ininnawa, the Tanete Institute, has an office in Bulukumba, and has promoted organic farming and the conservation of local plant seeds in the region. Their presence was fully supported by the Bulukumba authority at that time, including Tomy Satria.

In terms of indirect interactions with the state field, the case of Nardi is illustrative. Active with AcSI since 2008 and involved in advocacy for street traders in Terong Market, Makassar, Nardi became involved in the agricultural activities of Payo-Payo in 2010, when he was assigned to supervise the activities of Ininnawa in Soga Village, Soppeng Regency (to the north of Makassar). In 2014, Payo-Payo implemented the Village Information System (VIS) programme in Soga, and as part of this Nardi lived in the village for several months in order to organise local residents. He later married a woman from the village and decided to live there. The head of the village, who was the uncle of Nardi's wife, later offered him a position in the village administration. As such, Nardi has been part of the village government since 2017.

Meanwhile, Ininnawa has interacted with other elite members of civil society and other organisations through collaborative activities, including joint seminars and symposiums. For instance, Ininnawa has a good relationship with KPRM, a grassroots organisation that advocates for the urban poor and is part of the Urban Poor Consortium (UPC, a national network of like-minded organisations). In 2013, Ininnawa collaborated with KPRM to advocate on behalf of the street vendors who had been evicted from Terong Market. At the national level, Ininnawa has interacted with other NGOs through the aforementioned INSIST network. For example, through the INSIST network, Anto – the current leader of Ininnawa – has collaborated with Mitra Aksi in Jambi on agricultural projects (Interview, Anto, April 2019).

In the case of Ketjilbergerak, interactions with the state began when the organisation was contacted by the Indonesian Corruption Commission after the Commission had viewed the YouTube videos made by the organisation about the activities of urban young people. Collaboration began in 2015 with a youth camp aimed to encourage young people to monitor village funds. This programme continues today, and has expanded to Central Java; it could potentially be extended further, to the national level. As a community of young people with members from both urban and rural backgrounds, Ketjilbergerak has also been attractive to political parties. In 2019, for example, Ketjilbergerak was approached by the Indonesian Solidarity Party (a new party known as the 'youth party') for a seminar. Similarly, the Yogyakarta branch of Golkar – once the party of the New Order government – has approached Ketjilbergerak members to ask them to join its campaign teams (Interview with Invani, April 2021). Ketjilbergerak does not forbid its individual members to become involved in party politics. As a collective, however, the community remains neutral.

To sum up, in both Cambodia and Indonesia, the interactions of civil society elite activists with elites in the state field and the field of electoral politics, and their integration into these, are important dynamics. The different patterns of university-rooted, youth-led activism promoting various critical thinking agendas have, however, produced two contrasting patterns of elite interaction. In Indonesia, activists have displayed a general dislike of political parties. In Cambodia, on the other hand, interaction with elites from other fields – the state, in the case of PC, or political society, in the case of Politikoffee – have been foundational for elitisation. Elite interaction is here a goal in itself, reflecting widely-held boundary-crossing ambitions. Civil society elite

status is not the ultimate goal of activism; rather, the state, electoral politics, and, in the case of PC, even business are preferred fields for these activists.

Conclusion

Southeast Asia's youth bulge is expected to reshape the region, but in which directions, and following what logic, remains a complex question. Examining youth-led activism primarily targeting educated urban youth, this comparative study has raised and explored the role of civil society elite activists in shaping youth initiatives. Patterns of elite formation in youth civil society have significance for the overall role played by this field, both socially and politically.

We find that the different structures of the youth civil society fields in authoritarian Cambodia and democratic Indonesia have resulted in diverging patterns of elite formation and interactions. Specifically, we have identified how these different patterns are linked to competing agendas of critical thinking, which are intended to shape the analytical abilities of young people in the political and social fields. The key forms of capital enabling an activist to gain elite status are the same in the two countries: social capital and knowledge capital. However, whilst social capital is gained through networks within civil society organisations in Indonesia, in Cambodia social capital is generated either through networks that span the state or, alternatively, through networks of trust distinguished by integrity from state oversight. These two contrasting agendas are also associated with contrasting patterns of interaction with other fields in relation to elite formation. Whereas elite interaction beyond the civil society field (particularly amongst youth organisations) is commonplace but not foundational for civil society elite formation in Indonesia, in Cambodia interactions with state and political elites are essential. Here, youth activism also has a significant impact through cross-elite interactions and boundary-crossing. Activists may prefer the state, electoral politics or the economic field as fields of activity.

This does not mean that Indonesia lacks youth organisations with established networks that include political parties. One youth-based organisation with roots at the rural level, namely Anshor – part of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), the largest Muslim organisation in Indonesia – aims to gain political positions, and wielding political power has been an organisational target. Indeed, NU provided political support to current Indonesian president Joko Widodo in

the 2014 and 2019 elections. The difference between the Indonesian and Cambodian cases thus lies at the level of student-led, urban initiatives.

This suggests that, by shaping the structure of the respective fields, the type of political regime impacts elite formation and elite interaction among youth-led initiatives. In authoritarian Cambodia, where the CPP (as a hegemonic party) plays a central role in political life and is repressive of independent civil society, there is a strong orientation towards state society and political society as necessary tools for expanding youth networks. In democratic Indonesia, meanwhile, youth-led organisations have a greater variety of options to exercise their activities and political views, and there is a general perception that political parties are self-serving entities from which civil society organisations must keep their distance. Although some members of the elites of these organisations do interact with political parties, this is done at the individual (rather than organisational) level. At the same time, however, youth-led organisations in Indonesia are increasingly turning to the state for collaborative projects. In Cambodia, interactions with the state are characterised by the fact that its relationship with the hegemonic CPP is blurred, and youth-led initiatives are therefore split between those that enjoy close relations with the state and those that do not.

The influence of the type of political regime on elite formation, in terms of the role played by elite interaction and integration, also reflects different patterns in the overall politicisation of the youth field in the two countries. In Indonesia, organisations that educate youths to critically view social values, development problems or volunteer activities are only required to expand their interactions with and integration into other social fields (such as the state) when this is in line with their orientation. In Cambodia, on the other hand, youth-led initiatives on these topics will need to position themselves with respect to the state and political society. As a result, interaction and integration with elites from these fields are necessary for members to themselves become elite.

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CHAPTER 6

Leadership and Power in Cambodian Forest Conservation

Kimhean Hok
Astrid Norén-Nilsson

Forest conservation movements and networks emerging since the early 2000s form a vocal and visible part of the Cambodian civil society landscape, which, at a difference from other, mostly externally-created, organisations, may be seen as representing a genuine, indigenous civil society. Thus hugely significant, these networks are, however, only just beginning to attract scholarly attention. Scholarship to date has interrogated the origins of these movements and their relationships with formal NGOs (Henke 2011); how organisational dynamics and transnational and internal linkages matter in relation to whether and how forest groups respond to land grabbing and with what results (Verkoren & Ngin 2017); the impact on forest communities of climate change mitigation frameworks such as REDD+ (Nathan & Pasgaard 2017; Pasgaard & Chea 2013; Work 2017; Work & Thuon 2017; Kane et al. 2018); how different project actors shape REDD+ policy and outcomes (Pasgaard 2015); and motivations for community-led monitoring (Turreira-García et al. 2018). Little is known about the processes through which the leaders of forest conservation movements have established dominant positions and exercised their influence within their respective field of operations and across other social fields. We argue that these processes of elite formation, including through elite interaction, are crucial for making sense of the internal dynamics of forest conservation movements, their relationships with other social fields, and their relative success. In this chapter, we discuss two high-profile examples: the Monks' Community Forest (MCF) in north-western Otdar Meanchey province, and the Prey Lang Community Network (PLCN) in north-central Cambodia.

We understand elites as groups made up of individuals who control disproportionately large amounts of a variety of forms of capital (Bourdieu 1986). Following Bourdieu (1986: 242), we distinguish between economic, cultural, social and symbolic capital. Economic capital refers to money and ownership. Cultural capital can refer to dispositions (tastes and lifestyle), objectified capital (cultural goods) or institutional capital (such as educational qualifications). Social capital is the aggregate of the actual or potential resources that are linked to membership in a group, as the joint volume of capital (whether economic, cultural or symbolic) functions as a 'credential' for each member (Bourdieu 1986: 21). Symbolic capital stresses the symbolic dimensions of social life. In one of several definitions given by Bourdieu, it is any other capital (i.e. economic, cultural or social) when it is known and recognised (Lebaron 2014). In the following analysis, we speak about 'religious capital', which we consider to be a subtype of symbolic capital since it is founded in recognition of primarily cultural capital; interrelated social and economic capital also figures to various degrees. Following Khan (2012: 365), we further include political and knowledge capital. Political capital focuses on the management of 'political transitions,' while knowledge capital refers to 'ideas, knowledge, and ideology' (Khan 2012: 366, 370). We posit, following Bourdieu (1989), that positions in social space are based on the overall amount of capital that agents possess and their relative combinations. Positions of power are transferred across fields through the conversion of capital (Bourdieu 1986: 242).

This chapter is organised into three parts. First, we identify the structure of the Cambodian forest conservation field – that is, the network of objective relations among positions (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992: 97) – and the overall field dynamics in terms of elite formation and relationship to other fields, which allows us to then locate the two cases in the forest conservation field. Second, we discuss the leadership structure (formal and informal) and the way in which power is exercised in the two cases, examining the utilisation of different forms of capital deployed and exchanged by actors within and beyond the field of forest conservation activism in order to become influential elite actors. This includes a discussion of the relationship between the two movements on the one hand and state elites on the other, a relationship that is, we argue, characterised by a shared understanding of the structure of the field and by mutually recognised forms of capital. In the third section, we examine the interplay of foreign funding and domestic forest conservation activism, uncovering the impact of foreign funding on civil society elite formation and on interactions

within the field of forest conversation and beyond. In conclusion, we situate our analysis in the current context of Cambodia's diminishing dependence on foreign aid and deepening authoritarianism, in terms of the impact that these have on elite formation in the environmental activism subfield and the incentive structure for cross-field interaction, and the implied possibilities for and limitations on the future fate of forest conservation efforts in Cambodia.

The Cambodian Forest Conservation Field

Forest conservation movements in Cambodia emerged in the context of a 'Sustainable Forest Management' reform agenda, determined by late 1998 (Cock 2016: 145). This agenda, which highlights how ecological, social, cultural and economic dimensions interplay in logging operations, often includes the protection of the rights of forest dwellers, but is nonetheless predicated on ensuring the supply of wood (ibid: 31). Forest concessions, covering a substantial proportion of Cambodia's forest areas, were therefore not questioned (ibid: 194). The cancellation or suspension of virtually all major concessions by 2000 allowed more participatory forms of forest management to emerge, including the national community forestry and conservation movement, and a diverse array of conservation initiatives (Poffenberger [ed.] 2013: xv–xvi). However, these strategies continued to compete with private sector investments in economic concessions. Cambodia's forests were 'contested domains' in which competing forces strove to gain rights (ibid.). Communities were at a disadvantage in terms of economic and political capital. Over the following decade, public forests were reallocated at an increasing speed, with an overheated property market dominated by elite individuals in the political and private sectors.

In this context, an externally constructed civil society sought to develop new management systems to encourage the participation of forest dwellers. Donor requirements regarding civil society partners had resulted in a proliferation of externally initiated and resourced NGOs (Henke 2011: 289–291). Through consultations between this civil society and communities, a national community forestry movement emerged, which was welcomed by foreign development agencies and sponsored by the government. An enabling framework was put in place through the 2003 Community Forestry Sub-Decree, followed by the 2006 *Prakas* (implementation guidelines) for community forestry. These were designed to allow informal resource management systems to be subsumed under the formal state-sponsored system.

External civil society actors were also involved in the emergence of natural resource management networks. Whilst initial acts of resistance were independent, though sometimes NGO-supported, networking between activist communities was a product of NGO intervention. These started Community Organising (CO) NGOs in support of self-mobilised communities, and provided Active Non-Violence training, which, with the backing of national organisation NGO Forum, turned activism into a movement. This started with the fisheries movement and was replicated in the forestry sector. Initial successes in forestry thus involved both small CO NGOs and large national NGOs, and were enabled by strategic and financial input from foreign advisors. Provincial forestry networks were organised, which developed into a national network by 2001 (ibid: 301). By 2006, support NGOs and foreign advisors had created a new network of community activists and a linked advisory committee of support NGOs. Donors have since provided the network with technical assistance and services to support its development on its own terms (ibid: 304). However, as Henke has argued, the engagement of community members in externally initiated and funded trainings, advocacy activities and consultations has led to the emergence of network leaders who are not rooted in communities (ibid: 306). According to Henke, NGO involvement therefore stands in the way of the emergence of a genuine social movement (ibid: 288–289).

The forest conservation field is thus characterised by an uneven distribution of resources between a multiplicity of actors. There is a division between NGOs on the one hand and local conservation efforts and networks on the other. NGOs typically provide local conservation actors with economic capital as well as knowledge capital in the form of strategic and legal resources and support. Donors are, however, caught between competing interests. Cock (2016: 196) observes that reform-promoting external actors seem to have been primarily interested in advancing Cambodia's integration into the regional and global economy and thus feel unease over the focus on 'community forestry', or the contestation over forest areas becoming politicised. Henke (2011: 298) believes that donors are 'quite excited' about new networks, at the same time as he acknowledges that they could be reluctant 'to support the emergence of socio-political movements'. Donor supply of economic capital has not been converted into major political leverage. State elites hold dominant positions in the forest conservation field, skilfully harnessing the policy reform agenda promoted by Western aid donors in their own interests, so that the leverage that the donor community exerts over government deci-

sion-making is marginal. However, state elites do react to signs of domestic dissatisfaction, in particular from rural communities. Responses have ranged from policy change to targeting vocal communities and community leaders to quell their activities, including by labelling them as 'political' (Cock 2016: xi). Local conservation actors thus wield significant social and political capital.

The Monks' Community Forest (MCF), Sang Rukhavoan, is a forest conservation effort in north-western Otdar Meanchey province. Initiated in 2001 by Venerable Bun Saluth, a Buddhist monk at Wat Samrong, the forest was initially recognised at the provincial level as a conservation area (*tombon aphirok prei cheu*). By 2008, the forest, covering over 18,000 hectares, was given the status of Community Forest by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF). In 2018, the government combined Sang Rukhavoan with neighbouring community forest, Ratanak Rukha, and the two together were turned into the Sang Rukhavoan wildlife sanctuary, covering an area of over 30,000 ha. The success of Sang Rukhavoan contrasts starkly with the other twelve community forests established in Otdar Meanchey around 2008, almost all of which have since lost much of their territory and/or forest coverage. It also contrasts with other monk-led forest conservation efforts in Cambodia.

With the 1990s revival of Buddhism in Cambodia, engaged Buddhism appeared, with support from foreign NGOs (Harris 2001: 82–83). Venerable Maha Ghosananda, supported by the Cambodian diaspora and foreign NGOs, began to organise an annual peace march, *dhammayietra*, to focus on social and environmental issues, including deforestation. Monks became ecological activists, as Venerable Nhem Kim Teng led a dozen Cambodian NGOs through a pagoda network (Bektimirova 2002: 68). The ruling CPP objected to aspects of the engaged Buddhist agenda, in response to which monks strenuously sought to be non-partisan (Harris 2001: 83–85). Since 1998, when monks participated in post-election protests, both secular and religious authorities have heavily suppressed Buddhist monks' social engagement. The two Buddhist orders, Thommayut and Mahanikay, which operate under the aegis of the government, have been instrumental in suppressing activism. Nonetheless, Soeung & Lee (2017) identify a revitalisation of Buddhist peace activism since the late 2000s, including environmental activism. Monks have been involved in environmental education projects across the country. A network of monks in conservation has engaged in tree planting and tree ordination ceremonies. However, monk-led forest conservation efforts, including in Ratanakiri, Mondulkiri, Kampong Speu and Kampong Chhnang,

have been suppressed. The MCF is the only community of monks managing a protected forest area (Elkin 2013: 146).

Prey Lang Community Network is a community-led forest patrol network originating in the late 1990s in Kampong Thom that involves communities in four provinces that surround Prey Lang – Kampong Thom, Kratie, Preah Vihear and Steng Treng. To this day the network is not legally registered and not recognised by the state, yet it has been widely legitimised by donors and local NGOs for its patrol activities. Prey Lang covers roughly 530,000 ha in the central plains of Cambodia, making it the largest lowland evergreen forest remaining in the Indochina peninsula. Since 2013, there have been 53 logging concessions operating in Prey Lang (NGO Forum on Cambodia 2015). These concessions have allegedly encroached on the protected area and paved the way for large-scale illegal timber logging that has destroyed much of the resin trees and other natural resources upon which the local population relies. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, the network was merely a collection of disparate and isolated communities trying to make sense of the disappearance of their ancestral forest and resin trees due to large-scale logging operations and economic land concessions. Upon encountering international development program representatives – from the Southeast Asia Development Program (SADP) – and local NGOs, the network began with a series of gatherings of villagers discussing resin trees in Kampong Thom in the early 2000s. It was at this time that the local communities first engaged in confrontation with the companies. The network soon expanded to involve provincial meetings in Kampong Thom, Kratie and Stung Treng. Local NGOs were crucial to the process through which the network was formed; they took on the role of intermediaries between the PLCN and SADP. By 2004 the group had come to be more organised as a recognisable community-based forest patrol group. 2016 saw a major step taken by the state, which declared 432,000 ha of the total forest cover to be a 'wildlife sanctuary'. This introduced the community forest (CF) framework. The area covered by Prey Lang later became known as a collection of Community Protected Areas (CPAs) upon the transfer of forest management powers from the MAFF to the Ministry of Environment in 2016. The PLCN, though permitted to register under the CF and CPA frameworks, has never done so, claiming that this would restrict their freedom to patrol the entire Prey Lang area.

Leadership Structures and Elite Formation

In this section, we discuss the formal and informal leadership structures of the two cases, investigating which forms of capital are mobilised and exchanged

within and beyond the field of forest conservation activism to establish dominant field positions.

MCF

The rise to prominence of the Monk's Community Forest (MCF) is inseparable from that of its founder, Venerable Bun Saluth. The son of farmers in Samrong, the provincial capital of Otdar Meanchey, Saluth, lacking the economic capital to study, was encouraged by an uncle who was a monk to take the robes. He was ordained in 1990, at the age of 19, and by 1994 he had left to study in Thailand, where the conservation ethic of Thai monks made a deep impression on him. Returning to Samrong after five years, he became head monk (*chao athikar*) of Wat Samrong. Ven. Saluth's ordination and appointment constituted religious capital: he felt that it gave him the capability to 'contribute something to society and the government' (interview with Ven. Saluth, October 2018). In 2001, a former Khmer Rouge soldier was ordained and took Ven. Saluth into the forest, where he taught him about its animals. This gave Ven. Saluth the resolve to use his religious capital to protect the forest. He would do so until 2020, when he disrobed.

Religious capital has been the most fundamental form of capital underlying Ven. Saluth's leadership. The forest is perceived to be the domain of the monk, as demonstrated by the fact that it is known locally as *prey lok*, or 'the monk's forest'. Ven. Saluth's personal virtues – diligence and honesty – were understood in religious terms. Thus, one leading monk in Wat Samrong compared the relatively lavish sleeping quarters (*kode*) of other *sangha* heads with the way in which Ven. Saluth often slept in the forest (interview with Thor Turous, March 2019). Village volunteers in the area saw their work as part of their devotion to the monk. The Venerable's monkhood also defined his interactions with loggers. One activist who compared his experiences working in turn with villagers in neighbouring Ratanak Rukha community and then with Ven. Saluth described the way in which the Ven. Saluth related to the loggers as 'smoother and more powerful' (interview, March 2019). Whereas illegal loggers would point their weapons at ordinary villagers who came across them patrolling, they would not do so with Ven. Saluth, out of respect for him as a monk. Ven. Saluth often shared stories of how illegal loggers would get down on their knees and greet him with three bows, out of respect.

There has been synergy between Ven. Saluth's religious and forest conservation leadership roles, so that these have come to be mutually reinforcing. Religious capital infused Venerable Saluth's work in forestry conservation and propelled him to a position of significant influence in the field. Forestry conservation in turn strengthened Ven. Saluth's position within the *sangha*. Ven. Saluth gradually rose in rank to become Me kun (provincial *sangha* head) of Otdar Meanchey. Though his ascendancy cannot be said to be due solely to his forestry activity, it has been an important contributing factor. The board of monks (national level) select the Me kun, but at the request of the local level. The provincial Department of Cult and Religions and the provincial governor discuss the selection and pass on their request jointly to the upper level, following which the Samdech sangkhareach (the *sangha* head) typically approves the request of the locals. According to the Balat kun (deputy provincial *sangha* head) of Otdar Meanchey, it was the former Me kun of Otdar Meanchey who requested to the Department of Cult and Religions that Ven. Saluth (then a Balat kun) would succeed him (interview, October 2019). Ven. Saluth himself believed that his activities in relation to forest issues helped raised his status in the Buddhist realm (*visay putth sasana*). He felt that he had two parallel and interconnected leadership roles: as Me kun (head of *sangha*) in Otdar Meanchey protecting the forest; and as Me prey (head of the forest) (interview with Ven. Saluth, March 2019).

Ven. Saluth's religious capital has been crucial in securing economic capital for the MCF. Religious followers and visitors customarily donate food, beverages, money and equipment so as to make merit. Thus, a former leader of Ratanak Rukha explained that the resources of Ven. Saluth were counted in terms of support from his religious followers, whereas the civilian-run community spent their own money (interview with Soung Vong, March 2019). Monks also come from other pagodas, in the province and across the country, to help patrol the forest and bring donations. Organised under the Me kun, there are five district-level monk committees in Otdar Meanchey that collect donations and food monthly. Every month, at least one pagoda takes its turn to patrol the forest. According to the Me kun of Siem Reap, when *sangha* leaders saw that the government encouraged Ven. Saluth, they supported him too. This indicates that in a field in which the state holds relatively more power than the *sangha*, Ven. Saluth's successful manoeuvring to stay inside the boundaries of permissible action has earned the recognition of the religious capital that he has accumulated on the part of key *sangha* leaders.

Holding the position of Me kun, Venerable Saluth commanded the respect of local authorities, what can be understood as a form of political capital. Thus, a former Ratanak Rukha leader stated that while ordinary villagers could not speak up to local authorities for fear of repercussions, Ven. Saluth dares to do so. He said that there was a difference in the way in which the local authorities responded to incursions into forest patrolled by monks and into forest patrolled by local communities: the authorities would become involved if illegal loggers were detained in the monks' forest, but not in the Ratanak Rukha forest. When Ven. Saluth made his initial request for a protected area, the Head of the Provincial department of Agriculture asked him to secure permission from the provincial governor, Lay Vireak. Ven. Saluth already knew the governor, since he attended Wat Samrong when Ven. Saluth was head monk (*chao athikar*) there. Ven. Saluth had therefore met him and was able to secure his signature. Ven. Saluth then cultivated ties with each subsequent governor, facilitated throughout by his religious capital. Whichever provincial governor came to power would invite Ven. Saluth, as Me kun, to perform a blessing ceremony (*broah prom bompenh bâromi*). Ven. Saluth would introduce himself and ask for support. This way, Ven. Saluth built up a strong relationship with a string of provincial governors. One of these, Pech Sokun, promoted Ven. Saluth's activities to PM Hun Sen. Ven. Saluth also built a relationship with the PM through performing his religious functions. Whenever the PM came for ceremonies in Otdar Meanchey, Ven. Saluth would be invited as Me kun to perform a blessing (*chounpor chey*). These events gave Ven. Saluth a platform to inform the PM of his forest protection activities (interview with Ven. Saluth, March 2019).

Three factors have been central in allowing Ven. Saluth to obtain the full support of the local and national government, enabling him to convert his religious capital into a form of political capital. Firstly, the effectiveness of Ven. Saluth's work has been key to government recognition. The deputy governor of Otdar Meanchey has recognised that Venerable Saluth had first built his position himself as Me prey, and that when he then got full support from the government, he became even stronger, 'like a tiger with wings' (interview with Vat Paranin, October 2019). The second factor has been Ven. Saluth's rise to international fame. In 2010, the MCF won the Equator Prize for Asia–Pacific, a UNDP-organised award to recognise local communities with nature-based solutions to fight biodiversity loss and climate change. According to Ven. Saluth, this global-level recognition was seen to bring honour to the govern-

ment and the prime minister. The third factor has been the fact that Ven. Saluth has taken an apolitical line. The provincial authorities state that they support monks who protect the forest but not those who 'benefit' from it politically (interview with Vat Paranin, October 2019). Key to remaining apolitical has been the fact that Ven. Saluth works in 'one place' only. This refers to the fact that Ven. Saluth has limited himself to forest protection, not involving himself in topics such as land rights or human rights. Also, geographically, rather than being an activist on many different sites, Ven. Saluth has protected the MCF only. Though Ven. Saluth has been powerful in his community, he has wielded little power elsewhere. This has gained the Venerable the support of PM Hun Sen, a conversion of religious capital to political, economic and social capital. In April 2018 the PM signed the decision to establish a wildlife sanctuary, through combining MCF and Ratanak Rukha. When a vote to elect its leader was held, the head of Ratanak Rukha and Ven. Saluth both stood. Though 50 representatives joined from each side, Ven. Saluth was elected. Again, Ven. Saluth's religious capital was decisive; some in Ratanak Rukha thought the forest only had a chance of surviving under monk governance, compounded by problems of trust vis-à-vis their own head.

From the point at which Sang Rukhavoan was recognised as a conservation area onwards, work has been carried out jointly by monk and villager volunteers. In 2008, a formal governance structure was imposed by the Ministry of Agriculture based on community forestry guidelines. These stipulated that there should be a management committee structure, elected every five years in collaboration with NGOs and the government. According to the provincial department of agriculture, this process has been followed. According to a representative of NGO, however, elections did not take place, since the MCF was monk-led; rather, the Venerable appointed committee members.

While formally there is committee system, lower-level leadership is, in practice, conferred informally, based on engagement and devotion. It has been based on closeness to the Venerable. This has been a form of social capital that has been essential in becoming involved with forestry work. One person identified by the Venerable as an important adviser (in 2019) had acted as his right-hand man since 2008. In this man's words, 'One of my eyes, one of my ears, and half of my mouth are given to him [Ven. Saluth]; half is for him. The other half is for me to learn about society outside. My idea in going into this community is to sort out his problems.' For this 'special assistant' (*chomnuoy kar pises robos lok*), whatever formal position he might hold mattered little, as

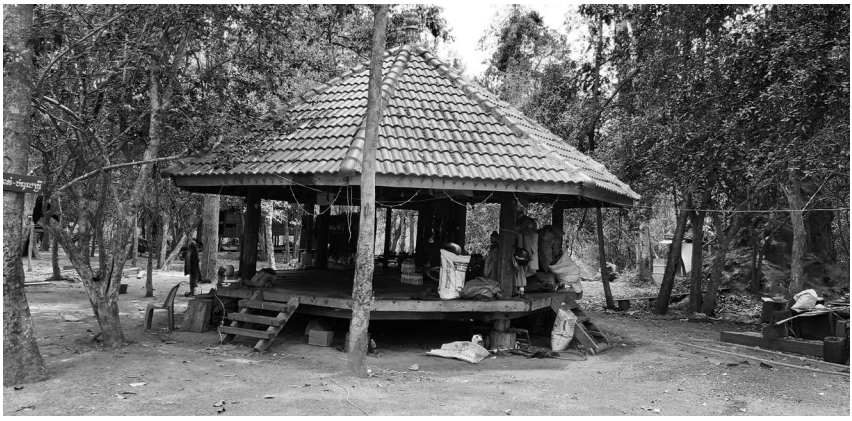

Figure 6.1 Forest headquarters of the Monks' Community Forest, where guests greet the Venerables (photo Astrid Norén-Nilsson). **Colour**, p. 263.

he stated that 'I don't know which level of the committee I am appointed to. But I have given half of myself to him.' (interview with Preap Sam Ol, March 2019) Two of the most engaged monks are Ven. Saluth's previous students, who returned after several years of studies elsewhere to help. The importance of such closeness counteracts female leadership. Females support the MCF as devotees who present donations, but it would be inappropriate for women to patrol the forest side by side with monks.

Knowledge capital has also played a role in allowing individuals to become trusted helpers of the Venerable. Ven. Saluth's right-hand man has acknowledged that his past experiences working for IOs and NGOs including the UN, the ICRC, UNTAC and local NGOs in Otdar Meanchey, have made him valuable. Another key person, who does not hold any formal position, is the chief of the community alliance of the 13 community forests in Otdar Meanchey. He shares his legal know-how and strategic thinking gained from facilitating relationships between the different communities.

For the monks, which individuals are committee members is not clearly defined. According to Ven. Saluth, when we interviewed him in 2019, there were 11 central committee members, including three monks. However, some of those interviewed were not aware whether they were committee members or not. One monk pointed out by Ven. Saluth as a central committee member stated that it is not clearly defined which monks are committee members. All monks in Wat Samrong, excluding those below age 15 and the elderly, join in patrolling activities regularly, irrespective of their formal positions in the committee.

At the village level, a sub-committee system is formally in place, but here too engagement and devotion are the basis of leadership. Ven. Saluth initially established contact with village chiefs. One former village chief recruited at the time believed that Ven. Saluth chose people according to their willingness to work hard. Another man pointed out by the Venerable as a subcommittee member was not sure if he was still on the committee, but stated that 'as long as he [the Venerable] needs me I will help without thinking about any position'. Generational change and economic hardship have made it difficult to stick to any rigid committee structure. Most commonly, villagers would put in a request (using Buddhist terminology, *chaul mok thvay bângkum*) to Ven. Saluth to become members. The villagers' willingness to commit time was the key criterion Ven. Saluth applied when deciding whether to accept them.

PLCN

Since becoming a social movement in the early 2000s, activists recognised by the community as 'active, trustworthy, participating since the beginning, knowledgeable and able to talk' have led patrol activities and mediated with NGOs and the state – qualities that remain key markers of PLCN leadership today. Following the introduction of a PLCN leadership election system in 2011, the PLCN saw a transition from an organic process of accepting leadership to a process of selecting and institutionalising leaders. However, most of those in leadership roles prior to 2011 remained, despite the introduction of formal elections.

This transition constituted a formalisation of leadership organisation and legitimisation, which Henke (2011) argues displays the NGOisation of a grassroots social movement via the introduction of strategic and technical planning. Under the formal structure, the first-tier leadership is the steering committee, which is made up of four representatives/coordinators, one from each province, who are elected every two years by members from their respective provinces. The second tier is the core team, consisting of 24 members (six from each province, who are elected/re-elected every three years by PLCN members from their respective provinces). Although they meet annual or semi-annually in a congress, PLCN activities (mostly bi-monthly forest patrolling and monitoring) are led separately by the coordination committee, made up of a coordinator and six core team members. In the context of a formal structure, major decisions must, in principle, be consulted upon and

agreed upon by all six committee members in relation to issues concerning their respective provinces.

Despite formal processes, there is a common pathway to prominence taken by key leaders in the network: this is that they have strong social standing and recognition in their respective communities. To illustrate, we examine the case of the PLCN's Kampong Thom province coordinator. Sopheap was born and raised in the community where confrontations with loggers first began. A firm and soft-spoken villager, Sopheap joined the 'patrol activities with the elders in the early 2000', and has been repeatedly elected to the position of provincial coordinator (a de facto leader for the province) since 2011. He held no significant job or role in any organisation prior to working closely with NGO partners and leading PLCN in his province. Apart from farming, mostly rice and cassava, and helping with the small family grocery business, he was approached occasionally by various NGOs to work as community lead and local representative/partner to help them to implement community programmes on a short term and demand basis. He used to be on the committee for a 'community saving' programme, and was a basic literacy teacher for three years on a government-sanctioned programme for rural communities with low literacy rate (interview with Sopheap, January 2019). His involvement in all of these activities has earned him credentials as one who is respected and listened to within his own community, and through whom NGOs expand their community outreach. This set of credentials stems from his cultural and social capital in terms of his place of origin, which is the main source of his social and cultural affiliations with certain groups, intertwined with his education and his social and professional exposure. Drawing on our theoretical framework, we understand this as deployment of cultural, social and knowledge capital.

In Sopheap's case, social capital is fundamental to other forms of capital insofar as it firms up the ground on which the others can be effectively deployed. His social capital manifests as credentials, which make him an outstanding member of the network and community, since its beginning. We understand Sopheap's credentials as symbolic capital, in the sense that they are known and recognised by his peers. His awareness of how he is perceived by his team reinforces the way in which he has come to perceive his legitimacy as leader. How he internalises this recognition is evident in the following comment describing others' lack of what it takes to lead, once he will retire: 'leading the community [PLCN Kampong Thom] is an extra burden and responsibility,

but an honour for sure […] sometimes I want to pass it [the role of coordinator] on to other members, but it takes lots experience, knowledge and respect from everyone too' (interview with Sopheap, January 2019).

This suggests a mutual understanding within the community of valued personal qualities. Some of the most important ones, which were mentioned both by core team members and by Sopheap himself, are 'proven commitment to the cause', 'transparency', flexibility and informality to ensure 'equal participation without discrimination regarding formal role and hierarchy or age', largely built on benevolent leadership and a spirit of camaraderie.

Sopheap's credentials also arise from his knowledge capital, manifested in his ability to manage confrontation and collaboration with local and state authorities – a delicate balance. Going too far in one direction risks him being perceived as too lenient toward the authorities, which may cost him a loss of trust from other members of the PLCN community; while going too far in the other direction and being too non-cooperative with the authorities would make it riskier and more difficult for his team to operate. The process of maintaining the right balance involves constant negotiation, confrontation and cooperation with the state authorities. Sopheap is trusted to manage this relationship because he is known to be effective in using his knowledge and his familiarity with laws and regulations surrounding environmental activism.

Illustrative of knowledge capital as key to PLCN leadership was a confrontation with the local police in January 2019, when they interrupted a meeting of 29 men at the town hall, at which one of the co-authors of this chapter was present. The police questioned the legality of the gathering and accused the organisers of 'not informing the local authorities'. Everyone was briefly silent and the meeting paused, until Sopheap responded 'We did inform the authorities. If we had not, how come you came to know? In fact, it is our right to assemble.' The police then asked for a copy of the attendance sheet. Everyone again paused and looked at Sopheap, who stood his ground firmly, replying that, 'there is no such requirement by law that I know of! If you want to take a copy [take a picture of it], as per our meeting rule here you'd need to put your name in it too.' After a brief heated exchange, the police left and everyone looked at Sopheap in admiration at his way of dealing with the authorities.

Sopheap is expected by his community to both cooperate with the authorities and to confront them, as necessary, so as to ensure that members of the community can patrol and monitor the forest with an assurance that what they are doing will be, at least to some extent, accepted by the national and local

Figure 6.2 Tree ordination ceremony by the Prey Lang Community Network (photo Kimhean Hok). **Colour**, p. 263.

authorities – despite the unclear legal status of their activities. There is effective cooperation between the community and the authorities, for example, in the way in which illegal logging is dealt with. PCLN community members have accepted that they must report this to the ministry's forest rangers and to local authorities and that they are not able to make arrests or press legal charges, or to decide what to do after reporting and submitting confiscated wood, logging equipment or vehicles.

The above example also highlights the ability of the leadership to express the community's point of view. This is described as *cheh niyeay* (knowing how to talk). The ability to articulate clearly and speak authoritatively on behalf of everyone is viewed as an essential leadership tool. Members of the community do not necessarily think that the coordinator knows more about what is at stake, but the coordinator can express it better and in a far more effective and assertive way than others. Sopheap is relied on 'in communicating with NGO partners' and in dealing with queries from the authorities; other members 'don't know how to speak like that' and may at time 'have good ideas too but can only express it in their own way when working together, but not in terms of formal and diplomatic words'.

In addition to knowledge capital, crucial to his credentials as leader is Sopheap's cultural capital, which is rooted in identity, a sense of belonging and loyalty to a particular group. Besides being articulate and well-versed in law and politics and the fact that he can manage relations with the authorities and with NGOs partners in a diplomatic fashion, he needs to belong to the

local community, and be different enough from what the local community consider an elite social group: NGO staff and foreign consultants. Although these sympathise with the community, they are different from it. To become a PLCN leader, one has to have shared place of origin and also share in tragedy with the community. This norm is understood by the staff of the professional NGOs who support the local community, which ensures that this dimension of leadership legitimacy is maintained.

Another example of cultural capital employed in leadership is that of a PLCN coordinator from Preah Vihear province, who is from the Kuy indigenous group. The Kuy make up the vast majority of non-Khmer dwellers within Prey Lang (with a population of about 250,000), and have been living for generations in the forested area. Sopheap in Kampong Thom, on the other hand, is of Khmer ethnicity and was born and has spent his whole life in his village. For both, their ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds provide repertoires of knowledge about cultural expressions of life. This speaks to their ability to engage in casual conversations in the village on an everyday basis about popular topics of conversation such as what is being planted or the collective harvest, and to joke and tease others in the village, for example about who is the heaviest drinker and who is most likely to sneak into karaoke clubs. They are able to describe the day to day struggles and livelihoods of the villagers in a far more vivid and candid manner than can the staff of professional NGOs, researchers or community leaders from outside the area. Leaders such as these are accustomed to projecting their understanding of local culture and the local way of life.

The PLCN leadership and its core membership are almost entirely dominated by men. However, women also carry out forest patrols, particularly the wives of the male leaders. For both the leaders and their spouses, PLCN's forest patrol is a physically demanding activity, which requires brute physical strength and a readiness to deal with armed loggers. One out of the four coordinators within the PLCN is female (though it should be noted that this does not meet NGO standards of gender inclusiveness). Key to this woman's success as a female leader is 'turning being a woman into an advantage', as she considers that 'the authorities wouldn't want to argue with a woman, whom the [predominantly male] authorities don't take seriously, and they would find it embarrassing and emasculating [to deal with a woman]'. For this reason, she believes she is able to get away with warnings and to escape intimidation in a way that her male colleagues could not (interview, February 2019).

There are several conclusions to be drawn from a comparison between the MCF and the PLCN. In both, formal elections have been transposed onto and are secondary to leadership structures already in place. However, the imposition of new organisational frameworks has taken place in different contexts: in the case of the PLCN, this has been the NGOisation of a social movement, whereas the MCF has transitioned from a protected area to a community forest to a wildlife sanctuary. In both cases, symbolic capital has been key to the legitimation of elite status, whether through expressions of religious capital as in the case of the MCF, or recognition of social, cultural and knowledge capital as in the case of the PLCN. In both cases, the relationship between the movement and state elites has been characterised by a shared understanding of the structure of the field and by a mutual recognition of the forms of capital possessed by elite activists, which have allowed for their manoeuvring within the boundaries of permissible action.

The Interplay of Foreign Funding and Domestic Environmental Activism

MCF

A string of partners has been involved with the MCF, and this has been central to defining the value and convertibility of capital. Community Forestry International (CFI) gave technical and financial help to enable the MCF to achieve community forestry status, to demarcate the borders of the protected forest, to set up patrols and to raise awareness of the protected forest. The MCF was part of the first REDD+ demonstration project in Cambodia, which was initiated in 2008, followed by the national UN-REDD Programme in Cambodia in 2010. The UN-REDD+ and the World Bank were multilateral donor institutions for REDD+ support. International NGO Pact, working with the local NGO Children's Development Association (CDA), facilitated the preparation and implementation of the CF/REDD+ project, in partnership with the Cambodian government (Forestry Administration). Several national and local NGOs have also offered assistance, including the Alliance of Religions and Conservation and Buddhism for Development (Elkin 2013: 139). In 2019, the MCF was still receiving support from the organisations Viro Kbal Spean, Punlok Khmer and Sahakum Doun Chi.

The ability to secure development funding is another form of social capital accumulated over time by Ven. Saluth. The initial initiative to develop a protected forest in collaboration with the monks came, however, from the CFI. The CFI's decision to set up a project in Otdar Meanchey province was prompted by several factors: protected areas here were larger compared to other parts of the country; 13 community forestry groups already existed in various stages of development; and NGOs in the area were few, leaving space for engagement. Moreover, the government was welcoming, and there was an engaged local partner, the CDA (interview with Amanda Bradley, September 2020). A major impact of CFI involvement was the adoption of the community forestry framework, which legalised the monks' forest tenure rights. In 2003, the sub-decree on CF management was passed, and by 2006 CF Guidelines were put in place that made it possible to set up a community forest. According to a CFI staff, CFI introduced the idea of community forestry to the monks and explained the legal requirements. A training plan was prepared on the different steps of the process, and assistance given in relation to each of these. The CFI also set up a network to link the 13 community forests in the province, led by a coordinator, and local NGO CDA helped to build collaboration. The network and its coordinator helped convince the monks that they should consider the CF legal framework as a way of solidifying their rights over the area. The CFI's intervention thus further established the value of knowledge capital in the form of legal know-how.

A second main impact of CFI involvement was that it translated existing forest governance arrangements into the CF framework, making them durable. The 2003 sub-decree on CF management stated that each CF would be led by a CF management committee, elected by CF members. The CFI helped organise elections across the Otdar Meanchey community forests, in a standardised process. According to the local authorities and the Ven. Saluth, elections also took place for the MCF. According to CFI, on the other hand, an exception was made for the MCF, because of a shared understanding that the Ven. Saluth was its leader, who would appoint committee members. Having elections seemed antithetical to the hierarchical arrangements within the monks' forest, which were based on devotion to Buddhism and to Ven. Saluth. The new governance structure therefore replicated the leadership that was already in place. The committee members were then invited to attend CFI technical trainings. CFI involvement thus solidified the existing elite by bestowing knowledge capital on them.

Development partners have also helped to build Ven. Saluth's national and international reputation. This reflects the way in which agencies involved in 'development' create narratives surrounding their interventions. A former CFI staff who coordinated the Otdar Meanchey REDD+ project recalled that for promotion they focused on forestry groups that were unique in some way, since it was easier to draw attention to that kind of group. Consequently, the MCF was promoted more heavily. It was a former student of Ven. Saluth's, working for an NGO in Phnom Penh, who told the Venerable about the prize that would have the greatest impact on his international recognition: the UNDP Equator Prize. The Ven. Saluth received the First Prize for the Asia–Pacific region in New York and rubbed elbows with Presidents and Prime Ministers. This level of recognition made him increasingly well-known throughout Cambodia. Students and academics started to flock to the MCF to study its success, building the Ven. Saluth's social capital. At the national level, international attention contributed greatly to recognition by the government. According to the deputy governor of Otdar Meanchey, the various awards won by the MCF earned the government's support. The partners that have worked with the MCF have thus helped to accumulate social capital, which was then converted to political capital.

Finally, its partners have sought to promote the MCF as a role model for other monks working in environmental conservation in Cambodia. The Alliance of Religions and Conservation supported a national network of Buddhist monks, through an overarching programme that then moved under the WWF. This is a significant initiative, given the lack of success stories similar to that of the MCF. By 2019, the network was dormant, plausibly due in part to the hardening government stance towards social activism. However, contacts made through the network remained. Ven. Saluth gave support and recognition to other engaged monks, though he could not lobby hard for them as that would risk impacting on his own forestry work. One example of this is the friendship between well-known activist monk Luon Sovath and Ven. Saluth. Ven. Saluth invited Luon Sovath to National Forest Day in 2019, a ceremony attended by the local authorities – who had arrested Sovath in 2017, after he propagated for opposition party CNRP. While the MCF may be a difficult model to emulate, for the reasons suggested in this chapter, the making of connections between socially engaged monks still opens a new set of possibilities.

Finally, the economic capital provided by foreign donors has supported each step of the forest conservation effort, as outlined above. However, having

attained government recognition and accumulated the symbolic capital that this bestows, the MCF/Wildlife Sanctuary is less interested in securing foreign funding and increasingly selective in engaging with partners. When we interviewed him in 2019, Ven. Saluth no longer received much NGO funding.

PLCN

The PLCN shares a similar string of international partners that have been involved in various ways and at different stages. Major international agencies such as USAID, UNDP and the EU have supported the network through donations for selected activities, but have refrained from directly endorsing it. Between 2014 and 2019, faith-based organisation Danmission has mainly been responsible for funding the network, through local NGOs, in activities ranging from forest patrols to the development of advocacy skills (with the Cambodian Youth Network [CYN])) and conflict resolution and dialogue (with the Peace Bridge Organisation [PBO]). In addition, it has had a dedicated budget for a PLCN coordination team (external to the PLCN) which aims to help advise the PLCN on strategy, management and report writing. In 2014, DANIDA, the Danish development agency, with the University of Copenhagen, helped the network launch the Prey Lang app, to monitor forest loss, with data analysis support from the university. In collaboration with CYN, the East West Management Institute (EWMI) conducted a baseline survey on the forest in 2014 to equip the PLCN with scientific evidence in their advocacy.

The first impact that work with these international partners had on the PLCN was the gradual accumulation of the knowledge capital necessary to mobilise the community and then to formulate its own organisational structure. The PLCN began working with isolated communities trying to make sense of forest loss in the late 1990s. They were angered yet unable to articulate their position, unfamiliar with any approach beyond physical confrontation with the logging operators. The idea of setting up a network was initiated in the late 1990s by a representative from an international development organisation who encountered frustrated villagers in an area of Prey Lang in Kampong Thom. He recollects that during his early meetings, 'people shared their experiences. Some had ideas, some did not' (interview, October 2020). His priority was to help villagers build a collective understanding of what was at stake and the possible ways in which the issues at hand might be addressed.

Starting in 2000, with the help of local NGOs, this representative gathered farmers and vocal villagers to discuss resin trees in Kampong Thom. Soon these local meetings expanded and meetings took place at provincial level in Kampong Thom, Kratie and Stung Treng. At these meetings, villagers were made aware for the first time that there is a specific legal article that forbids the cutting of resin trees. This early network formation was done with the support of the NGO Forum, which received funding from the Southeast Asia Development Program (SADP). The NGO Forum provided an institutional umbrella for the setting up of the network. However, it was not until 2004, after the ecological survey carried out by SADP, that members of the network began carrying out organised community-based forest patrolling.

Given the absence of community forest law at the time, a series of explorations were initiated by SADP and the NGO Forum into legal pathways to enable forest protection. One was the idea of establishing a 'community forest'. This would necessitate the communities patrolling the forest, with the help of the local authorities and the SADP, studying the boundaries of the forest and drawing these up to determine the area within which the patrols would have jurisdiction. This would rely heavily on senior villagers who knew the area. The knowledge capital of key leaders has increased over the years with subsequent capacity development and basic legal training within and outside of the community. Their accumulated knowledge capital has enabled the PLCN, especially its leaders, to become not only a fierce forest patrol group, but a knowledge-based advocacy group. The Prey Lang app has enabled the group to monitor logging activities, bringing tremendous credibility to their petitions and awareness-raising campaigns in Phnom Penh and on social media. Publishing and publicising their findings has also brought both attention from and friction with the Ministry of Environment. It has, to a limited extent, enabled the PLCN to convert its knowledge capital to political capital. For example, the Ministry has approached the PLCN to share and verify their findings with them first before releasing them to the public, promising, in return, that the PLCN would have a voice in policy dialogue – a request that the PLCN accepted. However, it has since released its findings at will without the ministry's approval, pointing out that the ministry has not acted on its findings but has, on the contrary, often sought to discredit them.

Secondly, in the process of acquiring and deploying their knowledge capital, leaders of the PLCN have gained social capital. The PLCN leaders have been brought into contact with other networks, including the MCF and

Mother Nature in Koh Kong, in the context of training sessions, annual festivals and other forest-related activities. The PLCN has come to be recognised as one of the most important environmental movements in Cambodia. Their involvement with NGO partners that support them has granted them access to networks that include those NGO partners. The social capital gained from a sustained relationship with NGOs and other networks and actors beyond Prey Lang has aided the transition of their struggle into the formal legal field.

The sustained relationships with development agencies and local NGOs have earned the PLCN political capital that helps them to manage their relationship with the state, even though they are a network that is not legally recognised. This political capital manifests in two major ways. First, their relationship with partners has afforded the PLCN institutional tools and access to engage with state actors. In 2015, the Prey Lang Working Group was established with participants from different stakeholders – from PLCN and from local and international NGOs. This working group was invited to a consultation workshop and a dialogue with the Forestry Administration in 2015 and to dinners with the working group from the National Assembly in the same year. Second, the increased visibility of the PLCN and the international attention it received landed them the Alexander Soros Foundation in 2014; the Yale International Society for Tropical Foresters (ISTF) Innovation prize; and the UNDP-sponsored Equator Prize in 2015. This recognition has improved the way in which state authorities regard the work of the PLCN.

Lastly, the credentials of the PLCN have attracted economic capital. This has made it possible for payments ranging from 15–35 USD per day (to cover food, travel and accommodation) to be paid to members on patrol duty or attending workshops and trainings. However, the PLCN accepts donations cautiously, as these could affect its reputation as an interest group not driven by economic incentives. It was the fact that it was poor and disadvantaged and that it went against established elite actors in the political and economic fields that gave the network its credentials in the first place.

In sum, the involvement of international development agencies has facilitated the passage of both the MCF and the PLCN into the recognised civil society field. This has shaped the leadership hierarchies and enabled the accumulation of credentials that are vital in building political capital, increasing the access that the leaders of the two movements have to national policy dialogue, as well as building their economic capital, including resources to patrol their forests. However, MCF and PLCN leaders have experienced and managed the impact

of foreign funding in different ways. While positioning itself as a qualified beneficiary of foreign funding, the MCF has relied far more on support from the state and local authorities and from patronage. The PLCN, on the other hand, has, from the outset, relied on the protection of donors who yield influence in the government. Prey Lang forest is 20 times larger than the MCF and has hosted operators and land concessionaries linked to members of the political and business elites in the country. There is therefore a far higher level of political sensitivity attached to the PLCN compared to the MCF. This means that the social and knowledge capital of the network is convertible to political capital only to the extent that the economic capital of the agencies with which they work continues to be convertible to political capital at the national level.

Conclusion

The formal and informal exercise of power in environmental activism in Cambodia can be characterised as interactions both within that field and across fields, conditioned by the recognition of various forms of capital mobilised by leading actors to negotiate their position and standing. This chapter has explored the internal dynamics of two high-profile forest conservation movements – the PLCN and the MCF. As we posited, positions in social space are based on the overall amount of capital that agents possess and their relative combinations. The long-time leader of the MCF mobilised religious capital, a form of symbolic capital, and successfully converted it to economic, social and political capital, thereby becoming a civil society elite actor, wielding significant influence over the forestry issue area in his home province. PLCN leaders began with developing their knowledge capital. Mobilising symbolic capital – the recognition of their right to represent the community due to shared origins – they have converted this to political capital, which helps them operate in an institutional space despite not being legally recognised by the state. They are now elite activists in civil society, exercising substantial influence over other civil society actors mobilising for forestry conservation in Prey Lang. These capital transactions account not only for the rise to power of the leaders of the two movements, but also helps to explain the different paths that their respective movements have taken. This chapter has also uncovered the similarities and differences in the ways in which foreign funding has shaped the leadership structures and the development of the MCF and the PLCN as environmental movements overall. For over two decades of

political, technical, and financial interventions from neo-liberal development aid agencies, donors have influenced the rules of engagement in the field by taking part in defining the value and convertibility of different forms of capital.

In this chapter we have given an account of the leadership dynamics within forest conservation over the past two decades; however, the structure of the field is undergoing change in the context of deepening authoritarianism in Cambodia, which has occurred in tandem with a diminished level of dependency on aid from Western sources. The past few years have seen an increasing presence and proactive engagement on the part of the government in relation to environmental matters. This has manifested in the form of more forest patrols on the part of rangers employed by the Ministry, more registered wildlife sanctuaries and community forests, and a greater number of site visits by senior officials. This development is an intensification of what Henke (2011) observed a decade ago: an effort on the part of the government to adopt and influence the NGO model of civil society, with the aim of cementing existing power relations and contributing to government efforts to build legitimacy.

A diminishing dependence on international aid in Cambodia has been correlated in recent years with a greatly increased level of intervention by the state in relation to the scope of operations and standard practices on the part of both environmental groups and donors. The state now dictates much more strictly the way in which groups and donors can operate. In this shifting landscape, the government sometimes also partners with foreign donors to create new civil society vehicles that do not pose a challenge to its interests, bypassing established ones. Thus in 2019 the government launched the highly publicised $21million USAID Greening Prey Lang project (2019–2023), which incorporated local networks, affected communities and environment groups as partners. Effectively replacing the PLCN, the project has been criticised by activists and scholars as serving the government agenda. In 2021, the United States suspended assistance to government entities under the project, because it had failed to protect Prey Lang.

In this new landscape, the future success of the two movements – the PLCN and the MCF – will depend on their ability to accumulate forms of capital recognised by the state; and, to a lesser degree, their ability to partner with international development agencies. The PLCN and the MCF will need to navigate a field in which accelerating deforestation in Cambodia must be approached as a manageable, technical issue that is solvable under the ministry's direction and leadership, rather than as a complex ecological crisis.

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CHAPTER 7

Development Aid and the (Re) production of Civil Society Elites

Human Rights and Anti-Corruption CSOs in Indonesia

Purwo Santoso
Indah Surya Wardhani

In this chapter we analyse the influence of foreign aid on the (re)production of civil society elites in Indonesia. We attempt to systematically analyse the extent to which foreign aid has facilitated or prevented the formation and regeneration of civil society elite groups by shaping fields and reproducing elites. Foreign aid is widely understood to be structurally embedded in formal CSOs, i.e. those formally registered in accordance with state regulation, which results in what has been termed 'NGOisation' (the dominance of formal NGOs) and 'elitisation' (the prioritisation of well-connected civil society actors with easy access to funding bodies and the capacity to manage foreign grants; see Chapter 1). This chapter finds that, although civil society actors in Indonesia have received significant financial support from foreign sources since the 1970s, they are aware of the limitations of donor support, including problems of sustainability. They have sought to avoid dependency and have created their own fundraising strategies. These strategies enable them to implement advocacy agendas in accordance with their own goals, which are not necessarily in line with those of donor programmes. In addition, this chapter finds that foreign aid simply serves, at times, to supplement the capital held by elite figures within civil society.

We explore the human rights and anti-corruption sectors, using the field theory offered by Bourdieu (1989, 1996) in conjunction with the strategic

action fields (SAF) approach introduced by Fligstein & McAdam (2011). As explained in Chapter 2, Bourdieu (1996: 263–299) defined fields as consisting of spaces in which actors and leaders within organisations can exploit different forms of capital – economic, cultural, social and symbolic (Bourdieu 1986, 1989) – to occupy dominant positions. This theory is fundamental to understanding the role of elite individuals in creating organisations and fields, in order to develop what is known as an activism 'habitus' (Karataş-Özkan 2011; Nilan 2017). Inspired by Maclean, Harvey, and Kling (2014), we use the term 'hyper-elite' to describe those individuals who are part of the 'elite of the civil society elite' – those who have created organisations and initiated fields. Recognising foreign funding as a critical device in these fields, the value of economic capital is nonetheless subject to continual power struggles as well as to considerable temporal and sectoral variation. In this sense, the effects of foreign funding on elite reproduction vary across time and between fields.

Despite the 'rich terrain' it offers for describing elite formation, Savage & Silva (2013: 121–122) note that Bourdieu's field theory is limited in its ability to understand transnational elites and global cultural processes. Therefore, we complement it with the SAF theory offered by Fligstein & McAdam (2011) in analysing the transnational political engagements of civil society actors when accessing and utilising foreign aid. SAF is used in the analysis of political strategies among civil society actors in the field, including in the context of collective movements and popular movements. In addition, SAF highlights the networks that reduce the autonomy of fields and bring about overlap between them (Fligstein & McAdam 2011). In this context, Harvey et al. (2020) shed light on the strategies used by elite actors to change, adapt and (re) embed their ideas and instrumental goals within fields while simultaneously bolstering their own symbolic capital and legitimacy. Through their networks, elite activists in a country like Indonesia reposition themselves, restructure historical and institutional forces, and convert their social and cultural capital into symbolic capital, often thanks to foreign funding. In this sense, foreign funding provides a strategic device for elite figures to convert their existing cultural capital (e.g. organisational culture and skills) and social capital (e.g. networks) into symbolic capital, thereby strengthening their organisation (including through elite reproduction).

To analyse the influence of foreign aid on the (re)production of elites, this chapter refers to empirical data collected through a review of written documentation relating to the financial and organisational activities of CSOs,

to semi-structured interviews with 15 civil society leaders in the human rights and anti-corruption fields, and FGDs (Focus Group Discussions). Comprehensive data regarding donor activities and the aggregate amount of foreign aid in these fields are lacking, and gaps have been addressed by reviewing documents collected from the CSOs studied.

This chapter focuses on the (re)production of elites through two mutually influential processes within CSOs, which took place during two distinct periods (Soeharto's New Order, and the post-Soeharto era). First, it explores how foreign aid has supported the accumulation and transformation of existing key forms of capital held by members of civil society elites – especially cultural capital (such as knowledge and organisational skills) and social capital (networks and political access) – into capital that can be used to establish and standardise a CSO. With an emphasis on individual members of elites in the two fields under study, this chapter shows that foreign funding has been embedded in the trajectory of field formation.

Second, the chapter shows the extent to which foreign aid has influenced actors' organisational capacity, particularly in facilitating the recruitment and training of new actors (elite reproduction) through formal and informal channels, with an emphasis on the latter. Foreign aid facilitates actors in their efforts to achieve their ideal and instrumental goals through CSOs.

Foreign Funding and the Formation of Civil Society Fields

The emergence of human rights and anti-corruption as issues in the spotlight in Indonesia coincided with the democratisation movement (Bambang Widjojanto, FGD conducted 30 October 2018). However, they emerged at different times; the former developed during the New Order era, in the midst of Soeharto's authoritarian regime, while the latter sprang up after the fall of Soeharto, driven by global concern regarding corruption, which was resulting in the diversion of development resources originating from international and multilateral organisations.

Knowledge and social networks were the most fundamental forms of capital underlying the rise to elite status of leaders of Indonesian CSOs during the introduction of transnational democratic values – an essential component of the human rights field. Foreign funding granted to selected CSOs was an essential device used by prominent civil society figures in expanding human rights values. Foreign funding also helped these civil society leaders to gain

or consolidate dominant positions in their fields. They accumulated capital and transferred it into new organisations, through which they disseminated ideas and values, campaigned and recruited new cadres. This section explores the historical and political structures of the fields that emerged. It shows how foreign aid to CSOs provided individual civil society leaders with important capital for establishing new CSOs – such as YLBHI/LBH, ICW, and FITRA – and contributed to the creation of the human rights and anti-corruption fields in Indonesia, in which these leaders held dominant positions. The prominent CSO leaders analysed here had considerable influence not only over the emerging human rights and anti-corruption fields respectively, but also within the wider Indonesian civil society field and arguably also in Indonesian politics more broadly. Hence, they are clear examples of individuals who are members of what this book terms the 'civil society elite'. The section also shows how CSO leaders had their own capital before donors came along. They were respected figures in their own fields, then converted this respect to support the ideals of the organisations to which they belonged, simultaneously consolidating their own dominant position in the field and their own elite status.

The Human Rights Field

The human rights field in Indonesia was created and shaped in the 1970s by pro-democracy activists who advanced a strong developmentalist discourse. Fakih (1991) writes that civil society activists' support for developmentalism was intended to achieve domestic political support and establish transnational networks; the development sector was not only fervently promoted by the government and the military, but also enjoyed significant access to international aid (Fakih 1991). Through activism in the development sector, civil society actors incorporated their values into a structuralist ideological framework (Eldridge 1996). They accumulated knowledge, networks and political support, as well as foreign aid, and over time this enabled them to create a new sector: the human rights field. Thus, the emergence of the field was a combination of various historical factors.

A legal activist and a staunch proponent of human rights, Adnan Buyung Nasution, worked closely with the International NGO Forum on Indonesia Development (INFID) network, which prioritised the achievement of justice and legal equality in a democratic context. Knowledge and national/transna-

tional networks were the most fundamental forms of capital used by Nasution and other activists to establish political and strategic connections with various prominent actors, including professionals, academics and politicians, as well as military officers and government officials who had advocated for political reform since the 1980s (Saptono & Tedjabayu 2012: xiv; Uhlin 1998: 94). Nasution established the Legal Aid Institute (*Lembaga Bantuan Hukum*, LBH) on 26 October 1970; its umbrella organisation – the Indonesian Legal Aid Institute Foundation (*Yayasan Lembaga Bantuan Hukum Indonesia*, YLBHI) – followed in 1981 (Nasution 1994). LBH was later known as a 'democracy locomotive', demonstrating the important role that it played in promoting democratic values in Indonesia.

Before establishing LBH, Nasution was a public advocate. After obtaining his first degree at the University of Indonesia, he obtained his master's degree from the University of Melbourne in Australia and his PhD from Utrecht University in the Netherlands. Before he established LBH, he discussed the idea with important political figures, including General Ali Moertopo – Soeharto's most trusted political assistant. He also enjoyed a good relationship with the governor of Jakarta, Ali Sadikin (1966–1977), with whom he also discussed the idea of establishing a legal aid centre. Both contacts were forged during his time as a student at the University of Indonesia in the mid-1960s. He also had close relationships with other political figures, including former Minister of Trade Soemitro Djojohadikusumo. This all shows that Nasution had a strong political network that allowed him to be confident in putting forward his ideas regarding the establishment of a legal aid centre. Donors came through his personal networks; for instance, LBH received logistical support (including offices in Central Jakarta and operational costs) from the Jakarta government (Firdaus 2015).

To avoid giving the impression of being critical of the regime, Nasution and the others who established LBH advanced a concept of 'structural legal aid', which viewed structural inequality as lying at the root of injustice (Nasution 1982; Saptono & Tedjabayu 2012: 32). This concept was understood as static and apolitical. LBH sought to develop its own understanding of human rights based on members' experiences of advocacy (Saptono & Tedjabayu 2012: 53). Later on, LBH became critical of the government, particularly on human rights issues.

Domestic funding was meagre, but foreign donors supplemented LBH's existing social and political capital. YLBHI received support from Dutch

(Novib) and British (Oxfam) NGOs active in the human rights, women's rights and environmental protection fields. By the 1990s, approximately 88% of the operational budget of LBH came from Oxfam and Novib (Nasution 1994: 120). This funding was used to upgrade LBH's programmes and organisational equipment; to support permanent offices in military-ruled 'red-beret zones' such as Aceh, Papua, and East Timor; and for a variety of other purposes (ibid.: 118). Support from foreign donors accelerated LBH/YLBHI's efforts to define the human rights sector by supporting individual leaders. Many young activists emerged from these local offices, which in later years operated as learning organisations, providing a means of producing formidable activists-cum-lawyers (with donor support). Several of these activists later served as YLBHI's chairpersons, including Bambang Widjojanto (an alumnus of LBH Papua, 1986–93) and Munarman (an alumnus of LBH Palembang, 1995–99); both remain prominent today. This, in return, strengthened the human rights field in Indonesia.

LBH/YLBHI was far from the only CSO seeking to define the human rights field between 1980 and 2000, but it is the one that has been prominent in the field. Others have included the Defenders of Human Rights (*Lembaga Pembela Hak-Hak Asasi Manusia*, LPHAM, established by Johannes Princen); the more radical Indonesian Front in Defence of Human Rights (Infight, established by Indro Tjahjono); and the Association of Pesantren and Community Development (*Perhimpunan Pengembangan Pesantren dan Masyarakat*, P3M, established by religious teachers and students). However, these CSOs and their activists were incapable of accumulating and maintaining knowledge, political support, transnational networks and foreign aid to any significant degree, and thus failed to dominate the human rights sector (Sciortino, Natsir & Mas'udi 1996; Uhlin 1998).

The Anti-Corruption Field

Although acts of corruption were rampant in the development sector as early as the 1970s, the issue of 'structural corruption' only became a subject of study in the 1990s (Nasution 2010). 'Structural corruption' refers to the view that corruption is not an individual attitude or behaviour but is rather related to a deep-rooted power system. The anti-corruption field is closely related to the human rights field, and indeed the main activists involved in anti-corruption activities often traced their roots to the human rights field. Those who focused

on the idea of 'structural corruption' viewed corruption, collusion, and nepotism as practices that buttressed the ruling regime and limited the ability of democracy to mushroom, and they therefore saw this form of corruption as a valid target of political reform (interview with Dadang Trisongko, former YLBHI administrator, April 2019).

At the beginning of the 1990s, YLBHI transformed itself from a legal aid institute into a 'pioneer of democracy', one that challenged the New Order's authoritarianism (interview with Boedhi Widjardjo, former LBHI/YLBHI member, June 2019). Challenging authoritarianism means challenging corruption and supporting democracy and political reform. Here we see the interconnection of fields, including members of the elites in different fields. Prominent members of the human rights field were involved in the establishment of the anti-corruption field.

In the anti-corruption sector, foreign funding enabled actors to accumulate various forms of capital and to transform the organisations they represented into domestic watchdog organisations, including by translating global norms of clean government. In this field, foreign funding focused more on strengthening organisational capacity rather than on the capacity of individual actors. This resulted in the establishment of Indonesia Corruption Watch (ICW) on 21 June 1998. Teten Masduki, who had lengthy experience with labour issues and had established strong networks with structuralist economists, was chosen as the organisation's first coordinator (interview with Teten Masduki, ICW founder, June 2019). In the late 1990s, he was already known as a grassroots activist working in the labour sector. For his work, Teten received the Ramon Magsaysay Award – one of the most respected and prestigious human rights awards in Asia – in 2005.

ICW established networks with pro-democracy activists active at the grassroots level, including farmers, fishermen and rural labourers, as part of its structural approach to defining corruption; it recognised that these marginal groups were most affected by corrupt practices. YLBHI and ICW members worked incessantly to accumulate popular support for eradicating corruption (interview with Affan Banong, former ICW researcher, April 2019).

Despite its strong ties with popular movements in the anti-corruption sector, ICW was strongly influenced by global movements that promoted transparency and accountability. Particularly important here was the support of Transparency International, which inspired ICW's use of transnational networks to obtain financial support (interview with Teten Masduki, ICW

founder, June 2019). In addition, foreign funding supported ICW actors' accumulation of knowledge, the establishment of working relationships with the Corruption Eradication Commission (*Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi*, KPK), and the establishment of political networks to organise popular movements for governance reform. A watchdog model, oriented towards the empirical investigation of corruption cases, was selected as the most effective means of creating popular pressure and support for clean governance (interview with Adnan Topan Husodo, ICW coordinator, April 2019).

It should also be mentioned that ICW has a specific approach to organisational work, one that tends to be more community-oriented than is common among professional organisations. It calls itself 'ICW and its members', which covers the organisers of ICW and its subscribed members. ICW also has a strong focus on collaboration. This organisational style influences the way in which ICW spends its international funding, which stresses the promotion of public awareness across various fields. The importance of reaching out and including other fields is emphasised by ICW's commitment to promoting collaboration between diverse actors and fields in fighting corruption (interview with Danang Widoyoko, ICW Coordinator, April 2019).

With its good political networks and financial support from foreign donors, ICW actors have been able to accelerate their efforts to establish and shape the anti-corruption field. Between 2009 and 2019, international donor organisations such as HIVOS (the Netherlands), the Ford Foundation (United States), Tifa Foundation and USAID worked closely with ICW to translate good governance into corruption prevention programmes that recognised and accommodated a range of sectoral issues, such as resource extraction, environmental degradation, elections and mass media. United by these issues, anti-corruption activists in diverse fields pushed KPK to implement corruption prevention measures (Bambang Widjojanto, FGD conducted on 30 October 2018).

Foreign funding also enabled other CSOs to actively define the anti-corruption sector through programmatic agendas and organisations, including the Indonesian Forum for Budget Transparency (*Forum Indonesia untuk Transparansi Anggaran*, FITRA). The establishment of these organisations strengthened anti-corruption activities in Indonesia. FITRA was formed in 1999 by a group of scholars and CSO activists. Between 2000 and 2008, it received fundamental support from the Ford Foundation and the Asia Foundation, which it used to encourage public participation specifically in budgeting and in its monitoring processes as well as to advocate for pro-poor

budgeting (Seknas FITRA 2019). Unlike ICW, FITRA has focused – with the financial support of donors – on conducting an economic analysis of the impact of corruption and on creating technical instruments (such as transparency indices and financial monitoring instruments) to promote transparency and combat corruption. Since 2009, FITRA has conducted biannual surveys – the Open Budget Survey at the national level and the Local Budget Study at the subnational level – to measure transparency. These surveys are supported by the Open Government Society (OGS) and the Global Initiative for Fiscal Transparency (GIFT), and similar ones have been implemented in more than 115 countries. FITRA has also translated transnational norms of transparency, participation and accountability into national and subnational programmes, thereby facilitating public involvement in budgeting and monitoring (interview with Misbakhul Hasan, General Secretary of FITRA, April 2019).

Apart from initiating FITRA, with the support of foreign donors, ICW also became involved in the initiation of several monitoring bodies in various fields, thereby strengthening the field. Examples include Publish What You Pay (PWYP) Indonesia in the extractive sector, and the Association for Elections and Democracy in the electoral sector. ICW also offers training services to state agencies and the private sector, teaching their staff to use anti-fraud instruments. With this mastery of technical accounting skills, the public has recognised ICW as pioneering anti-fraud instruments (Bambang Widjojanto, FGD conducted 30 October 2018).

To reach the broader public, and with the support of donor agencies, ICW has developed anti-corruption education programmes for young people and young activists. Affan Banong, a former ICW researcher, mentioned the fact that by working with various groups to campaign against corruption ICW members have indirectly strengthened their reputation within the anti-corruption field (interview with Affan Banong, April 2019). This reputation has made ICW respected in the field and provided it with a good base for forming broader networks of anti-corruption actors. Most current anti-corruption activists are related to ICW, either directly or indirectly. Foreign funding has thus provided ICW with an instrument for creating institutional strategies that enable it to maintain its reputation in an expanding field. At the same time, ICW and its members have promoted corruption eradication as part of a broader democratisation agenda in Indonesia.

Engaging in public debate has also been used by FITRA to complement its affirmed institutional strategy. FITRA's actors have expanded their roles in

civil society networks by engaging in a range of activities in the anti-corruption field that reach beyond the schemes of donors. According to Ervyn Kaffah, FITRA's Manager of Advocacy, the organisation's actors report any fraud that they uncover through their monitoring of local budgeting to KPK, using both formal and informal channels. In doing this, FITRA supports the KPK's coordination and supervision programmes (*korsup KPK*) and works towards its aim of preventing corruption (interview with Ervyn Kaffah, Advocacy Manager of FITRA, April 2019). This shows that although there is no specific support from donors for certain activities, FITRA has continued to implement and manage those programmes.

Foreign Funding and the Reproduction of Civil Society Elites

CSO actors use foreign funding to embed their own values, ideologies and goals (the 'rules of the game', including ideas inherited from their founders and previous leaders) within their organisations, causing these to be institutionalised within the organisation. This eventually facilitates the emergence of new CSO leaders. This process – transforming financial capital into knowledge, experience and organisational skills – is only possible after CSOs have been established for a certain period, because institutionalisation requires time. LBH/YLBHI have provided public legal aid and human rights services since 1970, ICW has promoted anti-corruption activities since 1998 and FITRA started in 1999. In the context of elite reproduction, donor agencies facilitate internal organisation more than field formation. Attention has been focused on improving the internal capacity of organisations, ensuring accountability and facilitating the birth of a new generation of leaders among younger people. The training facilitates the conversion of existing capital into stronger symbolic capital and recognition in the field, hence contributing to the reproduction of the civil society elite.

CSO leaders are aware that international funds will not last, and this encourages and stimulates CSO actors to avoid becoming reliant on foreign funding. Because of this, CSO leaders have developed various strategies to combine various sources of funding in order to sustain their organisation and facilitate the reproduction of cadres and future leaders.

The Human Rights Field

According to the YLBHI fiscal report for 2017–19, approximately 75% of its funding originates from foreign sources, primarily the Asia Foundation

(TAF) and the International Development Law Organisation (IDLO) (LBH-YLBHI 2018, 2019, 2020). In 2019, YLBHI managed foreign funds amounting to Rp 10.5 billion (USD 700,000). Funding from TAF has facilitated efforts to strengthen the justice system and to advocate on behalf of marginalised groups (Asia Foundation 2019). In 2017, YLBHI received Rp 1.7 billion (USD 133,000) from TAF to fund its activities, including its cadre training and recruitment programmes. LBH/YLBHI also spent some of this funding to support their commitment to establishing advocacy networks and helping vulnerable people, such as victims of development. This enabled them to avoid receiving donations from multilateral agencies such as the World Bank, which are unpopular in Indonesia (interview with Asfinawati, YLBHI chairperson, June 2019).

Foreign funding has enabled LBH/YLBH to work systematically, as well as to develop standardised modules and instruments for improving the qualifications of LBH's staff and public advocates. At present, YLBHI has 17 LBH offices throughout Indonesia. Since 2000, LBH offices have been autonomous in their fiscal and staff management, which forces them to seek out and manage their own fundraising and partnerships, though not all have succeeded in doing so. To maintain its organisational standards, YLBHI provides intermediate training for its staff and public advocates as well as advanced training for leaders; such training programmes are supported by foreign funding (Asfinawati, YLBHI chairperson, interview, June 2019). Thus, the reduced availability of donor funds significantly affects legal aid in Indonesia.

As mentioned previously, LBH/YLBHI have used foreign funding to support recruitment programmes. As a professional organisation, LBH conducts cadre recruitment and selection through an annual volunteer training programme known as the Workshop for Legal Aid (*Karya Latihan Bantuan Hukum* or Kalabahu). Kalabahu is fundamental for the organisation and is conducted annually, whether or not foreign funding is available; actors utilise whatever funding is available, especially when developing modules (interview with Arif Maulana, Director of LBH Jakarta, April 2021). Initially, Kalabahu was limited to improving the capacity of LBH members and public advocates; since the 1990s, however, it has been employed as a means of recruiting new members and expanding LBH's networks. Kalabahu schedules up to 40 training sessions per annum, with around 20% of its materials supported by foreign donors. In 2019, for example, Kalabahu involved 490 participants in 16 LBH offices (LBH-YLBHI, 2020). Most attendees were law students, and they

came from all over Indonesia; around 20% were invited activists from LBH/YLBHI's networks, who studied structural paradigms relating to social issues so that they could implement them in their own organisations. After completing Kalabahu training, participants generally spend a year as interns with LBH. Arif Maulana, the director of LBH Jakarta for the 2018–21 period, explained that approximately 80% of participants complete their Kalabahu training.

The volunteers who participate in Kalabahu are subsequently given the opportunity to apply for a position as an assistant advocate or staff member at LBH. YLBHI – as an institution of legal professionals – offers members the opportunity to develop a career in public advocacy, and thus volunteers are allowed to apply for positions as assistant public advocates after their internship concludes. Its members follow set stages: from assistant advocate to junior advocate, advocate and eventually senior advocate. To ensure the organisation's continued regeneration, LBH's public advocates may not serve for more than eight years. All certificates issued by YLBHI are recognised both professionally and academically (interview with Arif Maulana, Director of LBH Jakarta, June 2019). This shows the steps and processes of elite reproduction in LBH; ordinary members do not automatically become members of the CSO elite.

Arif Maulana and Asfinawati, respectively the Director of LBH Jakarta and the Chairperson of YLBHI for 2017–21, both joined the organisation through this mechanism. Thus, LBH's training activities have successfully facilitated the emergence of new leaders. Asfinawati became the leader of YLBHI through a lengthy process. From 2006 to 2009, she served as the Director of LBH Jakarta. Before that, she had coordinated several divisions at LBH Jakarta, serving (for instance) as the head of the research division and the case handling division. As a lawyer, Asfinawati had participated in the National Alliance for the Freedom of Religion and Faith, and had provided legal support to Indonesia's Ahmadiyya community between 2007 and 2008. Drawing on these experiences, Asfinawati pushed for LBH/YLBHI to recognise identity issues and incorporate them into its legal aid framework, and this constructive input contributed to her ultimate selection as chairperson. Her selection, which was in stark contrast to YLBHI's predominantly male leadership, was structurally supported by Nursyahbani Katjasungkana, a senior lawyer who sits on the Foundation's advisory board (interview with Asfinawati, YLBHI chairperson, June 2019).

The selection of Asfinawati, who had a history of minority rights advocacy, was also informed by the availability of foreign funds, which shaped the hu-

man rights sector by using the language of minority rights – including freedom of religion. Such language, often promoted by members of foreign-funded projects, has commonly appeared in Indonesian newspapers (Schäfer 2018: 10–11), showing that it has public support.

In matters of women's leadership, foreign funding facilitates the provision of opportunities in Indonesian CSOs (Laksmi Savitri, scholar and agrarian activist, FGD conducted on 19 October 2020). Donors may, for instance, require a balance of men and women in the activities they support. Between 2016 and 2019, concurrent with Asfinawati's first term as YLBHI director, several other outstanding female activists were also selected to coordinate foreign-funded CSOs. These included Dewi Kartika (General Secretary of the Agrarian Reform Consortium/KPA), Ruby Kholifah (Director of the Indigenous Alliance of the Archipelago/AMAN), Andi Inda Fatinaware (Executive Director of Sawit Watch) and Nur Hidayati (Executive Director of Indonesian Forum for the Environment/WALHI). According to Arif Maulana, the current director of LBH Jakarta, LBH/YLBHI has long had a gender-inclusive culture open to leadership by women. This was seen, for example, in the selection of Nursyahbani Katjasungkana (1987–1990) and Apong Herlina (1998–2000) as the directors of LBH Jakarta. Foreign funding further encourages a gender-inclusive culture, as it promotes the usage of quotas in the recruitment and selection mechanisms of organisations, thereby promoting gender equity in staff and leadership (interview with Arif Maulana, Director of LBH Jakarta, April 2021).

LBH/YLBHI's leaders are aware that international donations have limitations, and have opted to mobilise public funds through fundraising. This model provides the additional resources needed by LBH. Between 2016 and 2017, LBH raised Rp 1.3 billion (USD 86 thousand) from the public and alumni. Other resources have been collected through fees for its professional services. LBH Jakarta offers training activities for would-be advocates, and income from this service goes to the organisation. LBH Jakarta also receives support from the national government through the National Law Development Agency (BPHN) under the Ministry of Law and Human Rights, as well as from the provincial budget. Since 2018, LBH Jakarta has worked with alms distribution bodies to further fund its legal aid services (interview with Arif Maulana, Director of LBH Jakarta, June 2019).

The Anti-Corruption Field

In the anti-corruption sector, numerous international organisations have allocated funds to and established partnerships with CSOs to strengthen their corruption eradication activities. The Ford Foundation has, for instance, actively promoted good governance in Indonesia since the late 1990s, and has increased the level of involvement on the part of CSOs in corruption eradication activities (Sidel 2004). One CSO that has regularly worked with the Ford Foundation in this sector is ICW, which received USD 3 million from the Foundation to improve its organisational capacity during the 2017–21 period (Fasabeni 2019). ICW has also received and administered funds from a range of other sources, including USAID, DANIDA (Denmark) and Dutch HIVOS.

According to the ICW fiscal report for the 2017–19 period, 70% of its financial resources came from foreign sources (ICW 2019a, ICW 2019b, 2020). In 2019, ICW was responsible for Rp 7.8 billion (US$520 thousand) in foreign funds, which it used to improve its organisational capacity, train its staff, develop performance indicators for qualification purposes, conduct research towards developing anti-corruption instruments and educate members regarding taxation (interview with Adnan Topan Husodo, ICW Coordinator, April 2019). The fact that it draws on foreign funding affects how ICW works and the way in which it demonstrates its accountability for the funds it manages. For instance, to ensure accountability, the organisation has identified fund management skills as a basic requirement for staff selection.

Foreign funding has enabled ICW to deal with human resources systematically. Previously, ICW had relied primarily on informal recruitment mechanisms, i.e. internships and members' personal connections with pro-democracy activists. Husodo was one of the first generation of new recruits appointed by Teten Masduki (ICW's first coordinator, serving from 1998 to 2004). Masduki had designed ICW as a watchdog organisation, one that relied heavily on investigative reporting, and this investigative mindset was often shared by student journalists – who were also able to draw on the the writing, analytical and reporting skills that they already had (interview with Teten Masduki, ICW founder and coordinator, June 2019).

ICW has spent foreign funding on developing its organisational culture to prevent corruption, conduct research and develop prototype electronic instruments for procuring goods and services, to ensure transparency. Externally, it runs a professional consultancy service for the general public and

Figure 7.1 SAKTI Anti-Corruption School poster (courtesy Collection of ICW). **Colour**, p. 263.

government, teaching them about specific issues; for instance, oil companies are taught about issues in the extractive sector. In this manner, ICW has positioned itself as a pioneer in the anti-corruption field. It has also created new networks among anti-corruption actors in the bureaucratic, electoral and extractive sectors.

In a similar fashion, ICW has, since 2013, used an Anti-Corruption School called SAKTI (*Sekolah Anti-Korupsi*) to select and recruit the new cadres. This programme is supported by various funds and resources, and foreign donations constitute approximately 10% of its funding (ICW 2019a: 15). SAKTI is held once every two years and is designed to disseminate an understanding of corruption eradication in the context of democratisation.[1] SAKTI targets not only students and CSO activists, but also religious figures, professionals and private-sector actors. Nevertheless, non-formal mechanisms continue to be used to select ICW's coordinators and staff. At the same time,

1 ICW understands corruption to be a structural issue, one that is detrimental to democratisation and rooted in the abuse of power. As such, it positions and teaches about corruption not only as an administrative issue but also as a political issue.

its culture – which has a heavy emphasis on egalitarian friendships – has led it to rely heavily on discussions (*musyawarah*) to make strategic decisions.

As with LBH/YLBHI, when foreign funding began increasingly to emphasise gender mainstreaming in Indonesia, ICW began working in conjunction with feminist and women's groups to promote gender mainstreaming in the anti-corruption sector and to include gender dimensions in its advocacy framework. In this capacity, and supported by KPK, it formed the Indonesian Women Against Corruption (*Perempuan Indonesia Anti-Korupsi*, PIA) and the 'I'm an Anti-Corruption Woman' (*Saya Perempuan Anti-Korupsi*, SPAK) movements in 2014.

Foreign funding has also influenced the recruitment of new leaders in FITRA. As explained by Ervyn Kaffah, the Advocacy Manager of FITRA, the organisation recruits new cadres by creating internships to meet the needs of its programmes at the local level. This enables FITRA to gain new members from various backgrounds through its 'network-hubs' (*simpul jaringan*) in 13 regions. Each network-hub is semi-autonomous, coordinating with the National Secretariat (Seknas FITRA) in Jakarta but also carrying out its own programmes and conducting its own fundraising to finance these programmes.

Staff and cadres who have shown a strong commitment to programmes, and who are interested in pursuing a career at the national level, can apply for jobs, which are posted regularly by Seknas FITRA. To ensure that organisational standards are met, Seknas FITRA conducts a National Discussion every three years, during which it also selects the members of FITRA's national board and general secretary. General Secretary Misbakhul Hasan, for instance, was selected through this mechanism in 2018, ultimately using his track record in programme management to rise above his rivals (interview with Misbakhul Hasan, General Secretary of FITRA, April 2019). Previously, as part of the Central Java network-hub, he had been involved extensively in advocacy and local budget studies supported by the Asia Foundation, and from 2015 onwards he had served as Research Manager of Seknas FITRA; in this capacity, he was responsible for conducting surveys and studies as well as for developing instruments for budget monitoring.

Despite the indirect roles of international donor organisations in maintaining the field and reproducing the CSO elite, the leaders of ICW are aware that international donations are not always sustainable. ICW has therefore sought to collect funds from the public through fundraising. This strategy has strengthened ICW's position as an anti-corruption CSO, as well as showing

its strong commitment to the anti-corruption agenda. Danang Widoyoko, the former coordinator of ICW (interview, April 2019), mentioned that Rp 1.7 billion (US$113 thousand) had been raised from the public in 2019. This shows that ICW has earned public trust; in the 2010–11 period, ICW collected approximately Rp 84 million (US$5.6 thousand) through fundraising (Davis 2013: 15). ICW uses these funds to mobilise the public to criticise government policy and to investigate potential corruption cases in government institutions, as foreign money cannot be used to fund such activities (interview with Danang Widoyoko, ICW Coordinator, April 2019).

Conclusion

This chapter has shown that two intertwining processes are indicative of how foreign funding has influenced the efforts of CSO leaders to establish the field and to produce new members of the elite in the human rights and anti-corruption fields. In the first process, foreign funding provides actors with the necessary additional capital to establish new organisations and fields, and this, in turn, accelerates the creation of new subfields. In the cases studied here, the establishment of LBH/YLBHI, ICW and FITRA accelerated the creation of the human rights and anti-corruption fields. Over the course of more than two decades, facilitated by foreign funding, 'hyper-elite' individuals – the founders of organisations – crafted CSOs as learning organisations that, in an intensive fashion, imposed their values and instrumental goals on the new fields. LBH/YLBHI employed a framework grounded in a strong structuralist ideology to influence the characteristics of the human rights field, a framework that tends to perceive structural inequality as lying at the root of injustice. ICW – designed as a strong watchdog organisation – has shaped the anti-corruption field through its empirical investigation of the dynamics and orientation of corruption. Meanwhile, FITRA – with the institutional framework and technical capacity to develop budget monitoring instruments – has shaped public and government awareness of the need for proper budget and revenue monitoring as a means of stemming corruption.

In the second process, the influence of 'hyper-elite' individuals (particularly their knowledge and professional skills) has been embedded as the activism habitus of their organisations. This provides guidance for the activities of current and future CSO leaders and activists (Karataş-Özkan 2011; Nilan 2017) and is incorporated into the mindset of CSO leaders without diminishing

the performance of their own agency (Lovell 2003). Organisations design programmatic agendas, recruit new actors, create and expand networks and partnerships and carefully curate selected sources of foreign funding. In return, CSO leaders can convert cultural capital (knowledge and organisational skills) into access to foreign funding. Such funding provides for approximately 70% of all of the programme activities of the CSOs studied here, offering actors important capital for strengthening the design and operations of their organisations, in accordance with their ideals and instrumental goals.

LBH/YLBHI, a professional advocate organisation with a clear career path, has used foreign aid to standardise its institutional operations and to maintain the standard qualifications of public advocates, as well as to accommodate non-structural issues such as identity and religion into its advocacy framework. Its efforts to educate public advocates have promoted the accommodation of human rights as well as the creation of paralegal agents capable of independent advocacy. Meanwhile, the collective spirit and egalitarianism of ICW have enabled it to use foreign aid to optimise its organisational development.

The availability of foreign funds has allowed ICW to master managerial skills, and to make such skills a basic requirement for permanent staff. FITRA, taking the form of a consortium, has used foreign funds to support corruption prevention programmes and adapt them to sub-national and national contexts. This, in turn, has expanded its opportunities to recruit cadres with various backgrounds and capabilities, thereby benefiting the organisation. At the same time, these CSOs generate new actors in many other institutions with specific knowledge and expertise that are relevant to their own field. However, such specialisation poses a significant challenge for activists, as it prevents other activists without this capital from taking an active role.

While fundamental, foreign funding provides CSO leaders with insufficient capital to maintain political influence as points of reference; this capacity is determined more by actors' individual knowledge, networks and mobilisation skills, i.e. their ability to connect individual ideal values and instrumental goals with public preferences (Maclean, Harvey & Kling 2014).

The limitations of foreign aid can also be seen in its inability to facilitate for elite members of the CSOs to take on roles in existing political movements, or their political influence in diverse sectoral issues, because these programmes are not part of their agreements with donors. However, CSOs in the human rights and anti-corruption fields regard this as an effective strategy. For CSOs, the capacity of their leaders to respond to current po-

litical issues, and their individual capabilities – especially their knowledge, their networks, and their capacity to mobilise movements – plays a fundamental role in advocacy. Aware of the limitations of foreign funding, ICW applies informal recruitment mechanisms to select its new actors and cadres, thereby making the process less dependent on foreign funding. Meanwhile, LBH/YLBHI, which continues to use a formal mechanism – Kalabahu – to generate new cadres, has anticipated shortages in foreign funding by using its networks for public fundraising, gathering support and maintaining its materials and training sessions. By doing this, LBH/YLBHI ensures that its training sessions keep up to date and remain relevant to popular preferences.

Thus it can be seen that the decline of donor funds over the past 15 years has had a limited effect on elite reproduction, as CSOs have already sought alternative sources of funding, thereby enabling them to sustain their activities and sustain their regeneration.

This chapter has demonstrated that foreign support is situated within a context of ownership of different forms of capital held by civil society elite actors in Indonesia. Foreign funding has complemented and strengthened the existing capital held by prominent civil society figures, thus contributing to the reproduction of civil society elites. At the same time, foreign funding also has limitations of which civil society activists are aware, thereby driving CSOs to search for alternative means of generating resources, seeking to replace foreign funds once they are no longer available.

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PART 3

ELITE INTERACTION AND INTEGRATION

CHAPTER 8

Elite Interaction in Indonesia at the Local Level

A Case Study of Makassar and Kupang

Haryanto
Desi Rahmawati
Cornelis Lay

Democratisation and decentralisation have brought about a mushrooming of civil society organisations (CSOs) in Indonesia. Local politics, once tightly controlled by the national government and concentrated in the hands of the executive branch, has found new democratic life, as shown (for example) in the presence of CSOs. Citizens have become substantially involved in local development planning thanks to the good governance principles (including public participation) endorsed by many donor organisations. At the local level – i.e. in areas beyond the purview of the national government in Jakarta, such as provincial, municipal and village polities – CSOs have various forms. They can be branches of similar organisations at the national level, be part of a coalition of national CSOs, or they can be entirely local organisations (Diprose et al. 2020).

As mentioned in Chapter 4, in 2019 the government identified almost 17,000 CSOs registered with city or district governments and more than 8,000 registered with provincial governments. The fact that there is such a large number of CSOs indicates that there is a vibrant civil society at the local level, at least quantitatively, especially compared to the New Order era. Local CSOs cover a myriad of issues, and deal with diverse local political contexts. Nevertheless, as is the case at the national level, local CSOs fall into two categories based on their interactions with the state: those that exist outside the state and those that exist within the government (Savirani 2018), i.e. those that have

penetrated the government through a process that this book is describing as 'boundary crossing' (see Chapter 10).

This chapter explores the interactions between civil society elite activists and elite actors in other fields at the local level in Indonesia, as well as the factors that shape these interactions. The main focus of this exploration is two case studies, of two CSOs and their leaders, namely the Ininnawa Community in Makassar, South Sulawesi and Bengkel APPeK in Kupang, East Nusa Tenggara. Both CSOs work in major cities in East Indonesia, far away from Jakarta. However, interactions at the level of provincial capital cities and at the level of sub-provinces place certain civil society leaders in dominant social positions, including at the village level (Maschab 2013). Therefore, the civil society activists discussed in this chapter can be considered to be elite actors in the context of local and regional fields.

Ininnawa, which was initiated by a group of young people (see Chapter 5), works on the issue of grassroots organisation through knowledge production. Bengkel APPeK, meanwhile, has been active on issues of citizens' basic rights, including in public services, and thus has a stronger relationship with the local government than Ininnawa. Ininnawa's organisation takes the form of a community, with five formally registered sub-organisations. Bengkel APPeK, on the other hand, is formally registered with the state (as, by law, organisations that do not formally register may not receive any funding from external parties).

As its analytical framework, this chapter applies Strategic Action Fields (SAFs) theory to analyse the interactions between elite actors within particular fields. Fligstein & McAdam (2011: 3) define the SAF as 'a meso-level social order where actors [...] individual or collective [...] interact with knowledge of one another under a set of common ideas about the purposes of the field, the relationships in the field (including who has power and why), and the field's rules'. Although they use organisations, governmental systems, and even families as examples in their analysis of social movements, Fligstein & McAdam (2011) highlight collective actors rather than examining the logic of organisations or institutions. This chapter follows a similar logic, viewing CSOs not so much as organisations, but rather as units made up of collective actors who work under a set of common values and rules.

Following the Bourdieusian tradition, this chapter uses the term 'capital' to elucidate the resources available within the field (i.e. those used by actors in their interactions). It suggests that the main capitals available to elite actors are cultural (knowledge), social (networks) and symbolic. Bourdieu (1993:

7) defines symbolic capital as the 'symbolic degree of accumulated prestige'. He further notes that, in the field of cultural production, symbolic capital 'is founded on a dialectic of knowledge' (Bourdieu 1993: 7). Symbolic capital, which comes into being as the result of the transformation of cultural and social capitals that have gained recognition and legitimation, reflects the nature of the field. Symbolic capital in Indonesian local civil society fields may differ depending on the specific sectors in which CSOs are working and the opportunities for interaction between civil society elite actors and other elite groups.

The analysis in this chapter draws mainly on data collected through interviews with civil society leaders who have developed their capacity through activism as members of Ininnawa and Bengkel APPeK. The interviews were mainly conducted in 2019, with additional interviews and informal chats with Ininnawa leaders in early 2021. This article also makes use of secondary data (documents and references concerning the two cases, as well as news coverage in online mass media). The results of the analysis are presented in the following sections.

Interactions between Civil Society and Government Elites at the Local Level: A Review of the Literature

Post-Soeharto Indonesia has been marked by vibrant local politics, thanks to decentralisation, which in 2001 delegated power to the local level. Decentralisation has provided local governments with more authority in various sectors, excluding five areas that remain within the purview of the national government: foreign affairs, currency, judiciary, religion and security. It was followed by a mushrooming of CSOs at the local level. As a result, politics has become vibrant and dynamic at the local level, as is evident in the interactions between local governments, political parties, and CSOs. Members of the local civil society elite also interact amongst themselves, at times bound by common interests (Edwin 2003; Sulaiman 2015; Blyth et al. 2007) and at times coming into conflict – for example, when competing for resources (Kurniawan & Rahmawati 2017).

Interactions between CSOs and fields outside civil society have occurred for at least four main reasons. *First*, although local governments had the power to provide public services, their capacity in the early years of decentralisation was limited. Consequently, CSOs became local governments' partners in playing their basic roles, providing consultants (mostly individual) or pushing through

local byelaws relating to progressive agendas such as gender mainstreaming (A. Salim 2016). *Second*, international donors, through their good governance agenda, have urged local governments to exercise their power following the principles of transparency, accountability and participatory democracy, all of which are intended to improve basic public services. Civil society activists who became the partners of local governments instigated what is thought of as 'change from within' (Savirani 2018). *Third*, in the political arena, political parties are known to have a limited ability to groom their cadres, and many civil society activists thus joined these parties to contest elections, including at the local level (Bayo 2021; also see Chapter 10). CSO leaders from grassroots religious organisations have crossed boundaries, becoming politicians, such as in the case of Nahdlatul Ulama women grassroots in rural areas (Mahsun, Elizabeth & Mufrikhah 2021). To win elections, prominent civil society figures often mobilise grassroots voters in support of themselves or candidates they endorse, sometimes using informal 'political contracts', promising programmes and policies that will be implemented once they are elected (Savirani & Aspinall 2017; Paskarina 2015). *Fourth*, from the perspective of the CSOs themselves there has been a decline over the past decade in the availability of donor funds in Indonesia (see Chapter 7), including at the local level. Consequently, CSOs have sought alternative sources, including local governments. In essence, then, decentralisation has stimulated stronger interaction between civil society elite activists and elite actors within the state and in political parties.

A Case Study of Two Local CSOs

The Ininnawa Community and Bengkel APPeK both operate in provincial capitals in East Indonesia. However, they exhibit different organisational tendencies and show different trends in terms of elite interactions. To facilitate analysis of these two organisations, this chapter will discuss them through three sub-sections, respectively providing a general description of these organisations, exploring interactions among elite individuals belonging to the organisations and then investigating interactions between members of their elites and elite individuals within the state and in political parties.

This analysis focuses on civil society, the state, and the political elite; it does not include the business elite. This coverage stems from the results of our research; it does not necessarily mean that we would argue that it is impossible for business elite figures to emerge from the civil society elite at the local

level. The way in which we structured the research distinguishes between political and state elites. The political elite includes politicians belonging to political parties and who may be members of local parliaments, including 'boundary crossers' who have entered the political field. Members of the state elite occupy important positions in the state field, including at executive and bureaucratic positions. They enter the state field through political channels as well as through recruitment processes that are based on merit. It is the state elite that is the most important elite; it is this elite that supports the regional executive institutions that are responsible for local government policies.

The Case of the Ininnawa Community in Makassar

Ininnawa was founded in early 2000 by students of the Department of English Literature at Hasanuddin University in Makassar. As a student community, they wanted to promote critical thinking, and that was the basis for founding Ininnawa. Ininnawa has been active since at least 2002 (see Chapter 5). Nurhadi Simorok, one of the founders of Ininnawa, recalled, in an interview in 2019, that interest in reading was low amongst Hasanuddin students, particularly in the English department. With some friends, he began a series of small study groups discussing books, thereby motivating members to read more. The same spirit underpins Ininnawa: facilitating the field of cultural production and using education/training (in conjunction with grassroots activities) as a means of stimulating social change and economic empowerment (interview with the founders of Ininnawa, April 2019).

To achieve its goal, Ininnawa has five main units or sub-organisations, through which elite members of the community have developed interactions with many parties outside it. Each unit focuses on a different sector. The first two units, Katakerja and Ininnawa Press, are oriented towards promoting literacy. Katakerja runs a public library on the Hasanuddin University campus, while Ininnawa press is located elsewhere. The other units focus on grassroots activities. These are the Active Society Institute (AcSI), initially concentrating on advocacy for village governments before shifting its focus to the urban poor; the School for Farmers (SRP Payo-Payo), which helps villagers to obtain a comprehensive understanding of their villages; and the Tanete Institute (TANI), which promotes organic farming and the preservation of local seeds (interview with the founders of Ininnawa, April 2019). Each unit has its own specific activities. At the same time, each is integrally linked (or at least coor-

Figure 8.1 Katakerja literacy movement, sub-organisation of Ininnawa (courtesy Collection of Ininnawa). **Colour**, p. 264.

dinates with) other units. The community is also part of INSIST (Indonesian Society for Social Transformation), a Yogyakarta-based consortium of CSOs founded by Mansour Fakih, a respected CSO figure.

In its early years, Ininnawa received no funds from donor organisations. Its activities tended to be based on its own agenda, and they focused on the community itself, rather than it being organised as a formal/professional NGO that prioritised receiving routine funding from donor organisations. Nevertheless, its sub-organisations have collaborated with external parties, generally making use of the personal networks of Ininnawa's board members. Part of its network is a researcher from Japan Advanced Studies, which has partnered with Ininnawa to produce a social map of potential research locations (interview with Nurhadi Simorok and Ishak Salim, April 2019). Members sometimes generate their own funds to support their activities.

These organisational characteristics have shaped the interactions between the leaders of Ininnawa and other elite individuals, and they have helped the leaders of Ininnawa to gain elite status and to network with a range of civil society elite actors. This has, in turn, enabled them to obtain funds on a semi-personal level, some of which they have used to fund the activities of their organisation and to promote social transformation. The potential to do this has contributed to members' willingness to collaborate with prominent

figures from other local and even national CSOs in their activism, which has resulted in the expansion of members' perspectives (interview with Zulhajar, former AcSI director, April 2021).

Ininnawa's orientation towards knowledge production and critical thinking makes it unique in Makassar, where the public perceives CSOs to be 'spontaneous' institutions created only to access new funding opportunities, rather than seeing them as strongly institutionalised organisations oriented towards tangible goals (interview with a former Oxfam employee, 11 November 2020). In Makassar, even organisations with strong management and clear and transparent programmes are often accused of being 'chameleons' that claim to work for the common people but actually serve the government (Aziz 2010). Ininnawa, by positioning itself as more of a community than a formal organisation, implicitly excludes itself from competition for resources. As a result, it is regarded by other CSOs as non-threatening in terms of competition for resources (interview with Nurhadi Simorok, April 2019).

Before elaborating further on the Ininnawa community, it is important to elucidate the context in which it operates. As the capital of South Sulawesi Province, Makassar has long been one of the largest cities in eastern Indonesia. This city emerged in the 15th century as a major trading port, serving to connect the western and eastern parts of the archipelago (Makassarkota n.d.). Today, with a population of more than 1.5 million (Statistics Indonesia 2020), Makassar is the largest and most developed city in Sulawesi and eastern Indonesia. The local economy does not rely entirely on trade, though this sector continues to be dominant; the construction and manufacturing sectors are also prominent. In the past few decades, the education sector has grown rapidly, and today Makassar hosts more than 100 tertiary campuses (universities, academies and polytechnics) (Petamakassar n.d.). It is through these campuses that civil society has grown most rapidly. In 2013 Makassar was home to 127 community-based organisations as well as 420 registered non-government organisations (kesbanglinmaskotamakassar.blogspot.com n.d.). According to media reports, however, hundreds of these exist only on paper, and were created solely to access social aid (BeritaSatu 2014).

Interaction with Other Civil Society Elite Actors

Ininnawa interacts predominantly with other CSOs with a similar interest in knowledge production. Given the limited number of such organisations in South Sulawesi, Ininnawa has expanded its networks to the national level;

this has also enabled the relatively young organisation to expand dynamically (including with INSIST, as mentioned above). Ininnawa has run activities for INSIST, including a 'Youth Camp' (2003–2009), for which it received a small amount of funding from the local government, and training activities for villagers. Ultimately, Ininnawa has been able, through the interactions that have taken place between its leaders and leading members of other CSOs, to build connections with other organisations. These interactions have laid the foundations for more intense networks with activists-cum-authors, including the late Mansour Fakih, as well as the South Sulawesi-born author/activist Roem Topatimasang and the leading agrarian activist Noer Fauzi Rahman (InsistPress.com 2004). Ininnawa has used Topatimasang's networks extensively in order to expand its involvement in the network of knowledge production (I. Salim 2011), especially after becoming a member of INSIST. Through the membership in INSIST, leading members of Ininnawa can interact with other prominent civil society figures within organisations that are also members of INSIST.

At the same time, Ininnawa leaders have also interacted extensively with other members of the Makassarese civil society elite. In doing this, they have generally identified themselves with their specific sub-organisation rather than with the broader Ininnawa community. For instance, members of AcSI – a sub-organisation oriented towards urban issues – has established linkages with the Association of Pasar Terong Merchants (Persaudaraan Pedagang Pasar Terong, SADAR) and of the Hasanuddin University Student Activist Network (Lingkar Advokasi Mahasiswa Unhas) through their advocacy activities between 2008 and 2011 (interview with Zulhajar, April 2021; LawUnhas 2013). Activism has also enabled them to interact with CSOs headquartered in Jakarta, which in turn has led them to expand their activities to promote women's economic rights. These interactions with other CSOs have, in conjunction with academic capacity building, been cornerstones of Ininnawa's institutional advancement as well as of its leaders' individual development. Ininnawa's networks have made it possible for them to develop their capacity for leadership, writing and publication.

Tomy Satria Yulianto, the first director of AcSI and a leading member of Ininnawa, successfully accumulated knowledge and social capital before transforming it into political capital (as explored below). Before establishing AcSI, Yulianto had interacted extensively with prominent activists within Makassarese civil society. He had previously worked for the Indonesian

Consumers' Institution Foundation (Yayasan Lembaga Konsumen Indonesia, YLKI), a national organisation dedicated to promoting consumer rights; in 2005, he collaborated with Lore Lindu National Park in Central Sulawesi to promote conservation and community empowerment (interview with Tomy Yulianto, AcSI founder, April 2019). Using this organisational experience and his vast networks, Yulianto established AcSI not only to produce knowledge but also to conduct policy advocacy. This subsequently provided Yulianto with access to the state elite, and this, in turn, helped Ininnawa –through AcSI – to advocate on behalf of the merchants of Terong Market in Makassar (detikNews 2009). In 2014, Yulianto expanded his networks to the international level by becoming a CEO of the Nature Conservancy (TNC), an environmental organisation headquartered in Arlington in the United States (interview with Tomy Yulianto, April 2019). Subsequently, he successfully entered politics as vice district head in Bulukumba, as will be discussed further in the subsection on interactions between elite individuals within civil society and in politics.

Interaction with the State

In the case of Ininnawa, interactions between its leaders and elite figures within the state occur most commonly around specific issues, at the suborganisational level. Of its five units, AcSI and SRP Payo-Payo are those whose agendas are most relevant to government policies, and thus their members are those who most commonly interact with members of the state elite. When AcSI was established, for example, it began its activism by working with village governments to implement capacity-building programmes targeted at local residents and government officials. As Tomy S. Yulianto, the first director of AcSI, explained:

> We sought many references, and then we tried to replicate everything in one of the regencies [in South Sulawesi], in Maros. [We] worked together with the Maros District government to provide guidance to and improve the capacity of village communities and governments. [...] After that, we met Enal [formally known as Zainal Siko, an activist], who had long provided guidance and support to the people of traditional markets.
>
> (Interview with Tomy S. Yulianto, April 2019)

AcSI then shifted its focus to the urban poor. During their advocacy for the merchants of Terong Market, AcSI members interacted with several government officials in Makassar (RakyatSulsel 2012). This was not, however,

directly associated with its leaders' accumulation of political capital (interview with Zulhajar, April 2021). Their accumulation of capital was supported, rather, by further interaction with other elite actors.

Leading civil society activists who developed their capital with SRP Payo-Payo found that the highest level at which they interacted with village governments occurred during the advocacy conducted by their organisations regarding village funds or Dana Desa (interview with Karno B. Batiran, Director of Payo-Payo, April 2019). Since 2015, the Indonesian national government has allocated substantial funds to support village autonomy, with the requirement that communities are involved in the allocation and spending of said funds. Village governments, meanwhile, see the involvement of communities – including those supported by CSOs – as improving public reception of their policies. In turn, CSOs hope that this involvement will provide them with opportunities to insert or integrate their programmes into the programmes of village governments.

CSO leaders also accumulated the capital that has allowed them to become civil society elite actors, through interactions with members of the local government elite (particularly at the village level). The SRP Payo-Payo initiated the live-in programme, through which young volunteers are placed in villages to provide support. Some of these volunteers live in these villages for years, organising villagers and helping them to solve their daily problems. At the same time, they improve the relations between their predecessors and members of the village elite, in part by linking village-level policy advocacy with public programmes. This enables activists, particularly those who are already part of the elite, to utilise Ininnawa's networks to support their interactions with the village elite.

Before joining SRP Payo-Payo, Sunardi was the director of AcSI, replacing Zulhajar (interview with Zulhajar, April 2021). Sunardi worked in conjunction with the Forum for Village and Agrarian Reform (KARSA), an NGO based in Yogyakarta, to implement a programme to improve the capacity of village officials. Through a series of training activities, they helped village officials understand the new regulations regarding village funds (interview with Sunardi, April 2019; also interview, Yando Zakaria, KARSA founder, July 2019).

In addition, SRP Payo-Payo facilitated the setting up of a Village Information System (SID, Sistem Informasi Desa), based on mapping village economic capacity using a participatory approach, which meant that it was the villagers who conducted the mapping themselves. This mapping, together with other

data gathering activities, allowed the villagers to become aware of the economic capacities of their own village. This is how trust was established between Payo-Payo and villagers (interview with Karno B. Batiran, April 2019).

This shows that Ininnawa's use of its networks outside Makassar has facilitated interactions with prominent figures within the state, both Makassar-wide and at the village level, and this has the potential to shape personal interactions and relationships. Furthermore, the case of Ininnawa also shows how the personal networks of members of a civil society elite can facilitate their boundary crossing into the state field. Sunardi, aside from having experience organising and delivering knowledge to the local community in which he was working, also had extensive personal ties with village residents; for instance, his marriage to a relative of the village chief strengthened the trust between them (interview with Sunardi, April 2019). He thus successfully integrated himself into the village community concerned, Soga Village in Soppeng District, transforming his capital into political capital and cultivating trust, which culminated in his appointment as the village's Head of Governance. Sunardi's role in Soga village government has connected the villagers and their government, and has also led to regular interactions between Ininnawa (Payo-payo) and the village government.

Interaction with the Political Elite

Interactions between Ininnawa leaders and politicians, like those between them and members of the state elite, are not institutional but personal. For Zulhajar, a former director of AcSI, interactions with politicians have emerged not through advocacy but rather through personal networking. In 2018, he was contacted by Andi Sudirman Sulaiman – a former classmate – and asked to join his gubernatorial campaign team for the South Sulawesi gubernatorial elections in 2018. However, Zulhajar accepted only after Sulaiman and his gubernatorial running mate, Nurdin Abdullah, were elected. Before Nurdin Abdullah and Sulaiman were inaugurated as governor and deputy governor, Zulhajar was a member of their transition team; afterwards, he formally became one of the deputy governor's expert staff. In 2021, after Abdullah was imprisoned on corruption charges, Sulaiman was made acting governor (CNN Indonesia 2021). At the time of writing (2021), Zulhajar continues to serve as a member of the deputy governor's expert staff, and this position has enabled him to interact with various political parties and their supporters (interview with Zulhajar, April 2021).

This case shows how the intense interactions between leading members of Ininnawa and members of the political elite are not only rooted in their social capital, but are also supported by their accumulated knowledge capital. Zulhajar accumulated this knowledge capital through knowledge- and advocacy-based activism, formal education and his position as a university lecturer. The knowledge capital of civil society elite actors is also frequently supported by that of politicians. For example, Zulhajar's aforementioned membership in the gubernatorial transition team was also supported by Governor Nurdin Abdullah's position as a professor at the same university (interview with Zulhajar, April 2021).

Meanwhile, in the case of Tomy S. Yulianto – mentioned above – interactions with leading politicians have also been created and maintained through personal channels. These interactions enabled him to enter the political field in 2014, when he was backed by the Democrat Party in a campaign to join the local parliament of Bulukumba District. Yulianto acknowledged that his experience in the civil society field inspired him to enter politics by presenting himself as a new politician, a well-educated local boy. This image was important during his first electoral campaign, mentioned above (interview with Yulianto, April 2019).

He could not argue that his success in the political field has stemmed from his interactions with other prominent civil society activists, such as those belonging to Ininnawa. Rather, Yulianto's success in interacting with and even integrating himself into the political and state fields indicates that he benefited from Ininnawa's willingness to allow its leaders and members to interact personally with other actors. In 2015, a year after he was elected to the local parliament – and shortly after he had been made deputy chairman – Yulianto left the Democrat Party to join the National Democratic Party, and it was as a member of that party that he successfully ran for executive office. He won the election and became Deputy Regent of Bulukumba. Through his interactions with representatives of the National Democrat Party, he was able to become a member of the political elite, serving as the chairman of the National Democrat Party in Bulukumba until 2020, when his bid to be elected regent failed (Nurwahidah 2020).

The Case of Bengkel APPeK in Kupang

Bengkel APPeK, which may be translated as 'a place for repairing the advocacy, empowerment, and development of urban villages', was founded in 2006

by young activists who had grown disenchanted with the elite circulation mechanism of Yayasan Peduli Sesama (Sanlima), the parent organisation of Bengkel APPeK. Young activists saw that this older organisation prioritised elite circulation based on family relationships and did not provide space for self-development for those outside that circle of relationships. Bengkel APPeK has worked on a plurality of issues, including village autonomy, public services and even elections (bengkelappek.org n.d.). Generally speaking, however, as with its parent organisation, it has focused on fulfilling the economic and social rights of citizens. In this, interactional networks with elite actors have been an important part of its advocacy.

From the beginning, the founders of Bengkel APPeK designed the organisation as a professional NGO. This is evidenced in its organisational division of labour, its contracts and its recruitment systems, as well as in the stability of its funding – which comes not only from membership dues, but also from government/non-government grants at the local, national and international level. Unlike the Ininnawa community, Bengkel APPeK has established strong ties with leading figures at state level, and has interacted pragmatically with elite politicians and with other civil society elite actors.

Bengkel APPeK traces its roots to several other organisations, being a third-generation CSO. The first generation was Yayasan Alfa Omega (YAO), established by the Christian Evangelical Church in Timor (Gereja Masehi Injil di Timor, GMIT) in 1985 as a means of creating independence at the grassroots level. From this organisation emerged the activists who subsequently established the second and third generation of CSOs, and thus became new civil society elite figures. The second generation of CSOs emerged in 1997/1998, and included Sanlima, which employs non-litigation advocacy strategies in the governance sector, and the Association for Initiative Development and Advocacy for the People (Perkumpulan Pengembangan Inisiatif dan Advokasi Rakyat/PIAR), which employs litigation in its anti-corruption agenda. These organisations became part of the broader democratisation agenda.

The intense networking and interactions with members of the state elite that characterises Bengkel APPEK have been commonplace amongst CSOs in East Nusa Tenggara, which have generally sought funding from foreign and national donor institutions (Ama 2020). Local CSOs use this approach to ensure their continued survival and funding, establishing their offices in certain areas (such as Kupang, capital city of the province of East Nusa Tenggara) but conducting their activism elsewhere. Newer CSOs perpetuate

the pattern of interaction that older CSOs set up because many have their roots in these older organisations. At the same time, they continue to work in a fragmented manner; it often happens that established CSOs collapse entirely when they fail to adapt to contemporary issues, as well as due to lack of funding. As such, the production and reproduction of a local civil society elite, as well as interactions with other elite groups, are quite dynamic (interview with Institute of Resource Governance and Social Change/IRGSC activist, April 2019). It is not surprising that more than 100 institutions exist in East Nusa Tenggara. Many are unregistered, and lack much-needed institutional coordination (Ama 2020).

The relatively large number of CSOs, as well as their close ties with the state, is inextricably linked to the local context and situation. Although Kupang has had a lengthy history, tracing its roots to 17th-century colonialism, its economic development, unlike that of Makassar, only began when it became the capital of East Nusa Tenggara Province in 1958 (ANRI 2018). East Nusa Tenggara is still one of the poorest provinces in Indonesia. In the early 2000s, when Indonesia was experiencing a wave of democratisation and new CSOs were mushrooming, East Nusa Tenggara had a poverty level of 28.19% (Statistics Indonesia 2007). Though this poverty rate had been reduced to 21.21% by 2021, the province remains the third poorest in the country (Tamtomo 2021).

The underdevelopment discussed above also drew the attention and concern of international CSOs. Available information on the CSOs operating in Kupang (though minimal) indicates that many deal predominantly with matters of development and human rights, such as water, food production, environmental issues, justice and health (Mongabay 2020). Several have focused on stunting (Azifa n.d.) and the humanitarian effects of the Indonesia–Timor-Leste conflict, since East Nusa Tenggara shares a land border with Timor-Leste, which separated from Indonesia in 1999. The latest issue on which CSOs are focusing in Kupang is the plight of refugees from that conflict (Gayatri 2015). Many international donor institutions have taken the local government as their partner when designing and implementing programmes (IndonesiaRikolto 2015; Gayatri 2015). The presence of such institutions has further stimulated the rise of new local CSOs.

Interaction with Other Civil Society Elite Actors

There are different views within Indonesian civil society regarding 'going political' – a phenomenon of the post-authoritarian regime through which

a number of civil society elite activists have crossed the boundaries into other fields, both at the national and local levels (See Chapter 10). Different opinions sometimes contribute to fragmentation. In East Nusa Tenggara, this can mean that CSOs are less able to collaborate (interview with Laurensius Sayrani, April 2019). With regard to this, they differ significantly from national CSOs, which have been capable of collaborating and of generating a consensus, and thereby have been able to generate intense interaction among those sharing similar agendas, including in order to build budget sharing to facilitate the handling of urgent cases (interview with Dewi Kartika, Director of Consortium for Agrarian Reform/ KPA, June 2019).

Interaction among leading actors in local civil society occurs formally, for example through large meetings, often involving a donor agency. An example is a conference held by Bengkel APPeK in 2016, facilitated by The Asia Foundation (TAF), which gathered dozens of local CSOs in Kupang. This conference identified local issues and CSO problems. Even though the interaction between leading representatives of local CSOs in Kupang has not yet been able to build a solid alliance or integration, this effort has been important in building communication among members of the local civil society elite (interviews with Laurens Sayran and with Vinsensius Bureni, April 2019).

This effort constitutes progress, considering that previously Bengkel APPeK's interactions with other local civil society leaders had only taken place through the involvement of senior members in building institutions and the capacity of new cadres. During the early development of Bengkel APPeKK, its leaders had invited Sarah Lery Mboeik, the director of PIAR and a female boundary crosser, to carry out capacity-building for the organisation. They have also included Mboeik's name in the history of their formation (see bengkelappek.org n.d.).

Furthermore, in terms of advocacy for any local specific issue, collaboration between local civil society activists is supported by national and international donors, as seen in the context of advocacy for local regulations for persons with disabilities (Bere 2016) and of advocacy for safe school policies (bengkelappek.org 2017, 2019). In the context of their advocacy for local regulations for persons with disabilities, for example, Bengkel APPeK collaborated with Handicap International Federation (HIF), an international NGO with a branch office in Kupang. Bengkel APPeK also worked with YAPIKKA ActionAid, a national CSO, to promote the participation of communities in improving performance and safety in local elementary schools. It joins local

and national civil society networks to advocate on national issues, such as the weakening of Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) by political forces backing President Joko Widodo's administration. Bengkel APPeK has also established ties, in the context of several projects in Kupang, with Indonesian Corruption Watch (ICW), a national NGO that focuses on investigating and eradicating corruption (zonalinenews 2017). Collaboration with national and international networks is important for network expansion and as an investment for the future, including in relation to obtaining funding.

Interaction with the State

Interactions between leading figures within Bengkel APPeK and members of the state elite are symbiotic. Through such interactions, civil society leaders derive economic and political capital from the state; members of the state elite, meanwhile, benefit from the knowledge capital provided by CSOs. Such mutuality has stimulated the rise of boundary crossing practices, through which elite members of civil society penetrate the state field (see Chapter 10). Importantly, such boundary crossing practices tend to align more with the personal agendas of elite individuals than with those of their organisations.

Prominent figures within Bengkel APPeK view their interactions with elite actors at state level as having the potential to support their agenda to promote basic rights. Good interactions are believed to facilitate collaboration and cooperation. As stated by Laurensius Sayrani, one of the founders of Bengkel APPeK:

> We hold that our work requires us to work with people within the government who can support us. Our principle is that we require friends, allies with whom we can establish an advocacy coalition … [and] begin collaborating. This is part of the broader strategy … which we are applying.
>
> (Interview with Laurensius Sayrani, April 2019)

Bengkel APPeK employs similar strategies, using its interactions with members of the state elite to become the government's strategic partner in policymaking. It also tends to collaborate with the government in transferring knowledge, empowering villagers, and supporting vulnerable groups, including women and disabled groups. While the organisation's main concern has been the welfare of the local population, efforts to access state funding have simultaneously enabled its leaders to approach the state elite.

Such collaboration is indicative of a symbiotic relationship between civil society and state elites, which allows both sides to advance their own interests.

This will be illustrated below. During formal meetings and forums, members of the state elite often introduce CSOs as their development partners (lelemuku.com 2019). Such forums are attended by high-ranking administrators, including the Regent, the chairperson of the Local Development Planning Agency (Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Daerah, BAPPEDA) and the chairperson of the Kupang National and Political Unity Body (Badan Kesatuan Bangsa dan Politik, Kesbangpol), and this provides elite actors with space for intense interactions (see for example Goti 2019). These formal forums facilitate interactions between civil society and local government to enable them to advance a joint development agenda. Through these interactions, the political and economic capitals of members of the state elite are combined with the social and knowledge capital of civil society elite actors. It is common for the state, including at local government level, to offer an alternative source of funding to CSOs, which may be incentivised in part by regulatory demand for public participation.

Such synergetic interactions are heavily influenced by the dependence of CSOs on donors. The interaction between elite actors within civil society and members of the state elite is driven by the need on the part of CSOs to obtain funds, indicating that their collaboration with the government is to some degree determined by the conditions for obtaining donors. This is common in East Nusa Tenggara, where the national media indicates that local CSOs are threatened with dissolution as funds have begun to dry up in the past five years (Ama 2020).

Synergetic interactions between prominent civil society actors and members of the state elite may also be influenced by the involvement of former activists in government. One former activist, Frans Lebu Raya, has been highly successful in penetrating the state field, serving one term as Deputy Governor of East Nusa Tenggara in 2003–2008 and two terms as Governor of East Nusa Tenggara in 2008–2018 (IndonesiaRikolto 2015).

However, electoral mechanisms are not the only means through which leading activists interact with members of the state elite. Prominent civil society figures can also establish collaboration with the state bureaucracy. At times, they may work in conjunction with local government bodies, or they work with academics. This was noted by Tarsisius Tani, a Bengkel APPeK activist:

> We collaborate on rural development programmes, as well as district-level programmes. Our interactions are dynamic… [including] with the

> Provincial Office of Animal Husbandry and with the five District Offices of Animal Husbandry, the Provincial BAPPEDA … and academics. We have established good communications, and created an alliance that spans across East Nusa Tenggara. … We have also signed an MOU, drafted in February 2019 and signed in June.
>
> (Interview with Tarsisius Tani, April 2019)

Leading civil society actors have also collaborated with state officials on programmes targeted at rural populations. In doing this, they have interacted not only with government officials at the lowest level (the village), but also with decision-makers higher up, primarily at the district level. The leaders of Bengkel APPeK, for example, have worked in close conjunction with elite bureaucrats at BAPPEDA and at the Office for Empowering Rural Peoples (Dinas Pemberdayaan Masyarakat Desa, DPMD). Such interactions with village- and district-level governments also exhibit mutual symbiosis, and indeed shared understandings are often formalised in memoranda of understanding (interview with Tarsisius Tani, April 2019).

Interaction with the Political Elite

The interactions between leading figures within Bengkel APPeK and members of the political elite are rooted in similar practices among earlier CSOs in Kupang. Many politicians in East Nusa Tenggara trace their roots to CSOs, including the former Governor of East Nusa, Tenggara Frans Lebu Raya, who entered politics by supporting the Indonesian Democratic Party – Struggle (Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan, PDI-P) before using the party as his electoral vehicle (Tirto.id 2019; detikNews 2004; Abdulsalam 2019). Lebu Raya was known as a student activist who chaired the Kupang branch of the Indonesian National Student Movement (Gerakan Mahasiswa Nasional Indonesia, GMNI), which has been affiliated with PDI-P. He briefly worked as an academic at two local universities before establishing the Prosperous Community Foundation (Yayasan Masyarakat Sejahtera, Yasmara), which worked to improve nutrition and combat HIV/AIDS (Kompas 2008). Similarly, Winston Rondo, previously known as a Circle of Imagine Society (CIS Timor) activist, joined the Democrat Party and used this party to enter the legislature (serving from 2014 to 2019).

Three women, all former civil society elite activists in East Nusa Tenggara, have also become noted activist-politicians: Sofia Malelak de Haan, Sarah Lery Mboeik and Maria Yulita Sarina (a founder of Bengkel APPeK).

Through her interactions with influential politicians, as a prominent civil society figure herself, de Haan was able to become Deputy Speaker of Kupang District Parliament (serving since 2020) and Director of the Kupang branch of the Democrat Party. Mboeik, meanwhile, used her interactions with members of the political elite to represent East Nusa Tenggara at the Regional Representatives Council in Jakarta (2009–14). Mboeik also established wide networks with national CSOs, receiving the Yap Thiam Hien Award in 1999 for her dedication to human rights (see her profile in ICW 2014). Sarina's interactions with members of the political elite, finally, enabled her to obtain an important position in the Election Supervisory Agency (*Badan Pengawas Pemilu*, BAWASLU) of Kupang District (kupangkab.bawaslu.go.id 2019).

The case of Kupang shows that interactions between civil society elite actors and the political elite may take place through electoral channels (i.e. with activists entering political parties and contesting elections) or non-electoral channels (i.e. with activists conducting advocacy). Non-electoral approaches can be seen in the advocacy in relation to education in the local parliament in Kupang (bengkelappek.org 2017). Political parties are often interested in activists, owing in part to their accumulated knowledge and their experience with activism. For example, Melki Laka Lena, a national politician from the Golkar Party in Kupang, mentioned in an interview that there have been intense interactions between his party and Vinsensius Bureni – a former member of Sanlima and a founder of Bengkel APPeK (interview with Melki Laka Lena, April 2019). Electoral approaches, meanwhile, can be illustrated by Bureni's contestation of the executive election in Kupang in 2013 (Bifel 2013) and by his contestation of the local parliamentary election in 2019 (Bani 2019), in both cases through the Golkar Party.

As at the national level, the 'go political' agenda has not been fully supported by civil society activists at the local level. Some implicitly supported the agenda; many, however, found themselves organisationally incapable of using political resources (interview with Laurensius Sayrani, April 2019). In Kupang, however, such fragmentation has not been particularly severe – at least not in the case of Bengkel APPeK. The leaders of the organisation identified strategic positions in government agencies and monitoring bodies, and members supported efforts to fill these positions. This was evident, for example, in Bengkel APPeK director Vinsensius Bureni's electoral campaign in 2019, although he ultimately failed to be elected.

Activists acknowledge that their establishment of networks through electoral mechanisms can be problematic. For several reasons, there is no systematic consensus with regard to the value of boundary crossing. *First*, the public believe that activists should separate themselves from the state and political fields. *Second*, CSOs are institutionally incapable of supporting candidates, either by incorporating their political agendas into their programmes or by mobilising potential beneficiaries in support of their favoured candidates.

> Political parties are willing to accept [activists], but the people tend to hold … [that activists] must not join a party. … We're on the fence… we don't want to do practical politics, but we allow people [activists] to become involved in political parties. … To a certain extent, [CSO] networks are not allowed [for candidacy purposes]. We forbid [candidates] to politicise programmes. … They are likewise forbidden to incorporate their political agendas into programmes. … We hope that people know that [the candidate comes from] Bengkel [APPeK], but do not provide an [institutional] design for transforming target groups into political capital. … [So support for leaders] is personal, rather than institutional.
>
> (Interview with Laurensius Sayrani, April 2019)

Conclusion

The two cases discussed above show that interactions between civil society elite actors and members of other elite groups at the local level, be they in the civil society field or the political field, vary, in form and extent. The orientation and focus of CSOs, their level of dependence on the state and the local context in which they operate all influence their specific interactions.

Leaders of Bengkel APPeK have stronger relations with members of the state elite than do leaders of Ininnawa. Bengkel APPeK is oriented more towards implementing the development programmes of the local government and towards providing basic services to local residents, and it has an interest in accessing key development actors to improve its economic resources and conduct policy advocacy. The interactions between leading members of Ininnawa and state officials, meanwhile, are more limited, as their activities are oriented more towards producing knowledge to promote social transformation amongst farmers and other marginalised communities; the Ininnawa

community does not deal specifically with policy advocacy relating to basic rights for citizens, although to some degree they do so at the village level.

Prominent figures within these two CSOs also interact in different ways with other civil society elite actors. These differences may be traced to the different orientations of the two organisations; Ininnawa tends to promote the production of knowledge, while Bengkel APPeK takes a more pragmatic approach to promoting its programme in line with what local government policy's orientation, aiming at poverty alleviation. As mentioned, East Nusa Tenggara province is a province with a level of high poverty. The types of CSOs that are present there relate very much to development programmes. Makassar, on the other hand, is a trading city, with a variety of services, and its inhabitants orient themselves towards many issues, not just poverty or development. The local level of economic development contributes to the types of CSOs that are present, and eventually influences the way in which civil society elite actors relate to the state field.

Finally, in their interactions with leading politicians, prominent civil society figures may use both electoral and non-electoral means; this is shown in both the Ininnawa case and the Bengkel APPeK case. Interactions through electoral mechanisms tend to involve boundary crossing, through which civil society elite actors enter the political field. Meanwhile, in their use of non-electoral channels, both Ininnawa and Bengkel APPeK have used lengthy processes for interacting with the political elite. In doing this, their accumulation of knowledge/cultural capital, both through activism and through community organising, has been of paramount importance. Only by accumulating social capital through personal networks can they interact more intensely with members of the political elite. This is best evidenced by the Ininnawa case, where activists have combined personal and institutional networking to establish friendships and even marry into families that have supported their networks. In the case of Bengkel APPeK, meanwhile, politicians are more likely to acknowledge the cultural/knowledge capital held by civil society elite activists, and this inevitably shapes their interactions with them.

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CHAPTER 9

Agricultural Civil Society Elites in Cambodia

Interactions with Economic and State Elites

Unattributed[1]

Cambodia is an agrarian country in which the majority of the population depends on agriculture as their source of livelihood. The lauded economic miracle that has taken place in the country over the last three decades, which has been driven by aid and by investment in the manufacturing, real estate and construction sectors, has substantially changed the structure of the economy. This development approach has delivered double-digit economic growth, and a rapid economic transition from an economy based on subsistence agriculture to one based upon export-oriented manufacturing and services. Within this broad economic success, agriculture has been largely neglected. Small household farms have stagnated, becoming increasingly unproductive and unprofitable, which has led to the migration of an entire generation of rural young people to urban areas. Meanwhile, civil society organisations (CSOs) face many challenges in trying to mobilise farmers to make demands from the state, in the context of restricted democratic space since the 2017 dissolution of the opposition party CNRP.

Within this development process, there are tremendous power inequalities within the field of agriculture, in the context of relationships between the state and business and between the state and civil society. Elites in the economic and state fields enjoy a close and friendly partnership. Much of Cambodia's state or common land has been privatised and leased to state-connected elite actors in the economic field for plantations or agro-businesses. The

1 The authors wish to remain anonymous.

relationship between elite actors in the economic and state fields is usually consolidated through financial contributions from the former to the latter, typically donations to development projects and government activities. Civil society elites, on the other hand, have a rather problematic relationship with state elites, particularly if the former explicitly link rural farmer livelihood and development of the agriculture sector to empower grassroots mobilisation.

In this chapter, we ask the following research questions: What forms of capital do elites in the field of agriculture mobilise to help them in their interactions with elites in other fields, and with what results? To what extent does boundary crossing from the civil society field to other fields allow elite members of civil society to expand their spheres of influence? In order to answer these questions, this chapter will use two case studies – the Cambodian Centre for Study and Development in Agriculture (CEDAC) and Amru Rice. CEDAC is an NGO working to build the capacity and knowledge of rural farmers and grassroots associations, while Amru Rice is the leading producer and exporter of organic rice in Cambodia, working with rural farmers under the government's supervised contract farming scheme.

The chapter will begin with a brief methodology section outlining research tools, relevant concepts and data sources. This is followed by a review of the structure of the field of agriculture, outlining power relations between key actors. The next section discusses interactions between elite actors within agricultural CSOs on the one hand and other elite actors on the other, in terms of what forms of capital they mobilise in these interactions. This is followed by a section that discusses different patterns of boundary crossing, into the field of electoral politics and the economic field respectively. A conclusion sums up the main findings.

Methodology

Fieldwork was conducted in Cambodia between July and December 2019. In-depth case studies were carried out of the two organisations, CEDAC and Amru Rice. Data on the leaders of the organisations, on ordinary members, and on local community organisations with which the organisations were involved were collected through interviews, group discussions, field observations and secondary sources. 28 interviews were completed with target respondents, covering questions focused on the themes of elite formation and elite interaction. These interviews were recorded with prior permission and transcribed for documenta-

tion. Certain information from the interviews, such as name, age, marital status and educational background, were kept confidential. Gender balancing was also carefully considered when selecting participants for this study.

For our analysis in the chapter, we draw on Bourdieu's concept of capital (1996), which is useful for understanding the formation of and interaction among elites across the civil society, economic and state fields. Following Bourdieu, we identify three main types of capital: economic capital (money, property, etc.), cultural capital (knowledge, taste, symbolic codes, etc.), and social capital (affiliations and networks). Accumulation of these kinds of capital can be translated into the accumulation and exercise of power (Emirbayer & Johnson 2008). In addition, we use Lewis' life-history method (2008) in order to investigate the life and work experiences of elite actors and through this we investigate the phenomenon of boundary crossing between different fields. Life histories can also illustrate the interconnections between capital and the fields in which they are situated (Park, Rinke & Mawhinney 2016).

Power Relations and Elite Interactions in the Agriculture Field

Agriculture is the lifeline of the majority of the population of Cambodia, who live in rural areas and whose livelihoods continue to depend on subsistence farming. Although the share of agriculture in GDP has remained strong during the last three decades of economic boom, its contribution has significantly decreased – from 32.8% in 2008 to only 22% in 2018. The government's National Strategic Development Plan 2019–2023 continues to focus on agriculture and rural development as key priorities for poverty reduction and economic growth. The Plan centres on increased rice production, the expansion of agricultural land, crop diversification, increased productivity and investment in agro-processing industries and has the ambition of modernising the sector so as to engage with regional and international markets (RGC 2019).

Realising these governmental objectives requires overcoming a number of structural challenges facing the agriculture sector. A government report has identified these as a lack of investment in the irrigation network and in infrastructure; limited agricultural extension services; a lack of financial support for farmers; and fluctuations in the prices of export commodities (MAFF & IFAD 2019). These challenges are harmful to rural livelihoods, especially those of smallholder farmers, who are rendered unable to individually leverage their productivity and bargaining power vis-à-vis external buyers. For this reason, the concept of 'farmer

organisation', first introduced to Cambodia in the 1960s (Couturier, Savun & Ham 2006), has been promoted by the government as a means of improving smallholder agriculture. 'Farmer organisation' is a term that is used to describe entities that bring together farmers from one village or a number of nearby villages, who extract economic benefits from agricultural activities. There are three main types of farmer organisation: farmer groups, farmer associations and agricultural cooperatives (Theng et al. 2014). In 2013, a law on agricultural cooperatives (ACs) was adopted (RGC 2013) and many farmer organisations were subsequently established across the country (CFAP 2019).

The focus of the government's agricultural strategy has, however, been on large-scale agricultural investment from local and international companies, mostly oriented towards foreign markets (Oxfam 2019). The 2020 free trade agreement between Cambodia and China involves an aim of moving the agriculture sector from subsistence to commercial farming (WB 2020). These developments have transformed the sector, so that it is now largely dominated by the private sector, with links to the government.

Civil society plays a crucial role in the agriculture sector, both through providing policy input aimed at growth and through joining hands with the government and donors to promote and support domestic farmers through various poverty reduction and rural development programmes (ADB 2011). Most of the labour force in the sector lives in rural areas and needs a great deal of support in terms of infrastructure and technical advice and training in new farming methods, as well as in terms of mitigating shocks resulting from climate change, such as those caused by drought and flood and in terms of market access.

Elite Interaction: Capital Mobilisation through Local Capacity Building and Linking Farmers to Markets

In this section, we discuss how elite actors in CEDAC and Amru Rice accumulate and mobilise various forms of capital to use in their interactions with elite actors from other fields.

CEDAC

CEDAC is a local NGO working to support farmers in rural Cambodia. It was established by a French NGO in 1997 as part of the move to localise international organisations in Cambodia. CEDAC is well-known in the agriculture field for introducing innovative techniques to farmers, building their

capacity and associations, and linking farmers directly to the market for their products. CEDAC's programme to introduce a system of rice intensification (SRI) adapted from Madagascar helped increase rice yields for a group of farmers selected by the organisation. This attracted more farmers to join the programme, as they learned about the increased rice yields from their farmer peers. Following this success and the recognition that went with it, which constituted valuable social capital, CEDAC expanded the area it covered and garnered donor and government support for new agricultural projects. A range of donors working in the rural development and sustainable livelihood sector provided funding for CEDAC. This economic capital contributed to the organisation's further growth, as it helped it to maintain sufficient resources to implement its projects.

The establishment of farmer associations (FAs), another well-known initiative introduced by CEDAC, provided a means to rejuvenate CEDAC's social capital among farmers. Small farmers organised themselves into groups, whose members could access various services such as agricultural extension, savings and credit, marketing and capacity-building targeting women and young people. FAs and saving groups grew at a rapid rate and were praised very highly, not only by the farmers themselves but also by the government. The initiative was shown to contribute to improving health and to generating collective action and mutual cooperation among farmers and local civil society groups; to increasing incomes and savings; to improving the management of natural resources and the natural environment; and to increased participation in local governance (CEDAC 2021). CEDAC then signed an agreement with the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) in the early 2000s to take the initiative further. The state backing for CEDAC's work provided important political capital, which helped the organisation to expand its activities and increase its engagement with rural farmers. CEDAC worked with local NGOs to reorganise FAs to become active in producing agricultural crops and livestock (Ngin 2008). They also organised a number of public forums to disseminate information about their programmes and to attract farmers to join. The scale and scope of CEDAC's work positioned the organisation as one of the leading agricultural NGOs in the country, at a time when the capacity of the state was extremely weak and local resources were scarce. The government saw CEDAC as a respected and genuinely local development NGO in the agriculture field, and this perception enabled CEDAC to have direct dialogues with the government and to influence government agricultural policy.

Figure 9.1 CEDAC-organised local fair (courtesy Collection of CEDAC). **Colour**, p. 264

The founder of CEDAC, Yang Saing Koma, became well-known to many key stakeholders and a respected civil society figure. Koma came to wield significant influence within the agriculture field, establishing himself as a member of the civil society elite in this field, according to the definition of the term 'elite' used in this book. Donor funding to support his ideas and projects was abundant, and was sourced from all the main donors working in the agriculture field at the time. The expansion of CEDAC's work on the basis of this economic capital and in a context of urgent local demand significantly extended Koma's and CEDAC's influence through the farmer associations. By 2010, about 140,000 farming families were implementing SRI in 21 Cambodian provinces and were able to increase their productivity significantly. The support given by CEDAC covered important aspects of production, including (1) training in the SRI method; (2) lowering the cost of production by making organic chemical fertiliser available to farmers; (3) training on climate coping strategies and water storage; (4) support for community-level finance training and training in management for sustainability; and (5) community governance (interview with CEDAC staff member in Kampot province, August 2019). One community leader proudly described the support that his FA had received from CEDAC and emphasised the high level of credibility that CEDAC enjoyed through their work with farmers:

> CEDAC provided two trainings on SRI and on lending/saving for the members. Then they helped us with the governance structure of the saving

> group and equipped us with skills in saving, management, leadership, accounting and report writing. Initially, our group was not formal as yet, but then we registered and got recognised, with a legal document from the Department of Agriculture in 2005. We had around 153 members joining the community and generated a substantial amount of savings. With CEDAC's support, we expanded and set up milling machines in the community through which we could process the crops we harvested and sell them for a high price.
>
> (Interview with a FA leader in Kampot province, August 2019)

From the community leader's perspective, CEDAC not only provided knowledge capital relating to agriculture but also social capital, linking the rural community to high-level state actors, donors and NGOs operating in the agriculture field. The fact that livelihoods improved in the areas in which CEDAC was working attracted many donors and NGOs to work with them. The experience and established management records of the FAs affiliated to CEDAC also enabled the government, particularly the Department of Agriculture, to implement other livelihood and rural development projects with funding support from many relevant NGOs and donors.

Furthermore, the reach of CEDAC's work was inclusive of Cambodian young people, of whom there are many in rural areas, and who represent the next generation of potential farmers and good citizens. CEDAC's youth development programme has been visionary and highly inspirational in terms of addressing one of the structural challenges facing the country's agriculture sector: a serious shortage of labour due to very rapid rural–urban migration. The programme provided capacity building and support for young people that allowed them to become meaningfully involved in agriculture and in local community development. Through it, young people received knowledge capital in the shape of training in new agricultural techniques, English language skills, community participation and public speaking. They also received political capital: they were encouraged to partake in various community development activities and also to engage in local governance and mobilisation to demand political accountability from the government (interview with CEDAC staff in Kampot province, August 2019). A youth activist explained that through these trainings and activities, he had been inspired to contribute to solving problems facing his community, and wanted to see positive changes leading to a better society. This prompted him to become active in politics.

This politicisation of CEDAC's FAs soured relations with state elites. Government agencies and local authorities were highly suspicious and feared lending CEDAC any kind of support. They became uncooperative during CEDAC's activities and project implementation. This fear was, however, partly relieved by the long-standing endorsement of CEDAC by Chan Sarun, Minister of Agriculture (1998–2013), a personal friend of one CEDAC's board members. The Minister backed CEDAC projects and approved of its establishment of FAs (interview with CEDAC board member in Phnom Penh, March 2019). This social capital ensured that MAFF still supported CEDAC's work. The support from the ministry also stemmed from the fact that CEDAC had filled a void by providing necessary services to farmers, which were supposed to be public services and thus the responsibility of the ministry.

Amru Rice

Amru Rice is the second largest rice exporting company in Cambodia and is owned by a Cambodian national, Song Saran. The company was established in 2011, and grew from a struggling family-owned rice milling business to become, at the time of writing, the leading producer and exporter of organic rice in Cambodia, integrated into the international rice market. By 2014, it had become the fourth largest exporter of rice in Cambodia, and then, between 2014 and 2019, rose to become the third largest exporter of rice and the largest exporter of special rice (Amru Rice 2019). In recent years, the company has seen increased rice yields and profits and has formed a wide community of rice producers. The company has contributed to the socio-economic improvement of many local farmers and has also maintained a competitive price for rice for communities in its target provinces, which include Preah Vihear, Kampong Thom, Kampot, Kampong Cham and Ratanakiri. Like CEDAC, Amru Rice works with agricultural cooperatives (ACs). Unlike CEDAC, however, Amru Rice works with rural farmers through a contract farming arrangement, meaning that although it has civil society-like characteristics in supporting farmer organisations, it follows a business model. Its leader can therefore be considered to be primarily a member of the economic elite in the country, and only to a lesser extent a member of the civil society elite.

The founder of Amru Rice, Song Saran, has accumulated knowledge capital from higher education as well as from previous experience working in the NGO sector, capital that he has mobilised to build and grow his business.

Based on the potential of his business model, which focused on the rice export market through agricultural small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), he was able to attract economic capital from shareholders and donors. One donor was the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, which provided Amru Rice with SME funding. This economic capital allowed Saran to continue developing his business model, promoting smallholder farmers and improving the quantity and quality of the rice exported by the company. He also received knowledge capital, in the form of guidance on how to implement a transparent and accountable business model, together with technical support for rice planting. In the business model that it uses, Amru Rice acts as the middleman, collecting rice from farmers through contract farming arrangements. The company does not deal with farmers directly, but instead works with ACs that group farmers together. This network of ACs represents a key form of social capital for Amru Rice.

Amru Rice studied these ACs in depth, including their challenges: how they initially only focused on self-help groups rather than SMEs, which generated little economic capital, and how the share of team benefits led to a deterioration of trust among cooperative members. Based on this assessment, they tailored their support to the cooperatives. Through contract farming, the company guarantees that it will purchase rice from farmers and provides them with training in methods of rice planting, loans for farming expenses, and basic infrastructure. These benefits mean that the farmers believe in Amru Rice and that they continue to supply organic rice to the company based on agreed amounts. The social capital earned by Amru Rice is evident in the following quote:

> In Samakee Rohas Meanchey cooperative, farmers are able to invest in tools or farm machinery for their agricultural activities in order to increase their productivity and thus their income. For many of them, a higher income means that they are able to send their children to university in order to obtain bachelor's degrees instead of sending them to work in the field as soon as the children finish high school.
>
> (Interview with community leader in Preah Vihear province, July 2019)

Amru Rice has come to be known for the help it gives farmers to enable them to increase their rice yield and income and for its promotion of the well-being of local agricultural households. The cooperatives working with Amru Rice bear witness to the active support that the company has given them, especially in terms of infrastructure for storing their produce, milling

and drying. They acknowledge the company's contribution to the improved livelihoods of farmers in the cooperatives.

Apart from partnering with communities – the ACs in Preah Vihear, Takeo and Kompong Speu – Amru Rice has also commenced cooperation with a multitude of NGOs, including CORA Company, SNEH, Community Union, the International Volunteer of Yamagata (IVY), the Development and Partnership in Action (DPA), Oxfam and World Vision (interview with front-line staff in Preah Vihear province, July 2019).

The social capital that Amru Rice has earned through their support for pro-poor agriculture, together with its public–private partnership business model, have granted Saran access to government officials, who need this kind of social and economic capital from the private sector to successfully implement government agricultural policy. Consequently, Saran has managed to assume a dominant position within the agriculture field, within but also beyond civil society. He has become quite influential in policy circles, and this elite-level integration with members of the state elite has helped his business to grow. He has a close relationship with members of the government, who trust him, and this has enabled him to garner support from his business peers, as demonstrated in the fact that in 2019 he was elected to the position of president of the Cambodia Rice Federation (CRF). Saran has become the government's success story in the agriculture sector.

Aided by integration with members of the elite in the state field and the social capital this has bestowed, the company has continued to extend and build partnerships in the economic field, with other private companies, international shareholders and agricultural communities. Through this, Saran has attracted more investment to support his business, enlarging his investment capital and integrating into the international rice market. State support has also helped Amru Rice build trust with farmers. Amru Rice's rise, to become one of the leading rice exporters in Cambodia, has helped to realise the Cambodian government's ambition to export rice, through connecting the rice produced by rural farmers to export markets in China and Europe, further enhancing Amru Rice's influence.

There are significant differences between the ways in which the elite actors running CEDAC on the one hand and Amru Rice on the other have accumulated and mobilised various forms of capital to help them in their interactions with elite actors in other fields. In both cases, knowledge and social capital gained from work with farmers are the main forms of capital mobilised in

elite interaction. The fact that Amru Rice works with rural farmers through a contract farming mechanism, however, means that its leader is first and foremost a member of the economic elite. This exemplifies the potential for overlap, even integration, of economic and state elites. CEDAC, on the other hand, has developed a problematic relationship with members of the state elite, through trainings and activities that have politicised FAs. In this case, it is only social capital in the form of personal networks with members of the state elite that has kept the organisation afloat.

Boundary Crossing: Seeking to Expand Spheres of Influence from the Electoral Politics and Economic Fields

In this section, we will explore strategies employed by the leaders of CEDAC and Amru Rice to expand their spheres of influence so as to better execute their organisational goals and objectives.

In the case of CEDAC, its leader engaged in a strategy of boundary crossing into the political field. This was publicly denounced by government leaders and resulted in suspicion and limited cooperation with CEDAC. This leader finally joined the state so as to have an influence on agricultural policy, but was only able to do on condition of defecting from the party he had co-founded and joining the ruling CPP. By contrast, Amru Rice's boundary crossing into the economic field has awarded it privilege and protection from members of the state elite, which has benefitted the rural smallholder farmers with whom they work (Sothear 2014).

CEDAC

The long-time leader of CEDAC, Yang Saing Koma, converted capital gained in the civil society field to boundary cross to the field of electoral politics. He took up this strategy because he believed that achieving change in agriculture would not be possible unless he could gain political power and hold state office to mobilise more resources (Norén-Nilsson 2019). Koma resigned from the position of Executive Director at CEDAC in 2012, and became the Programme Director of the newly-established Grassroots Democratic Party (GDP) in 2015. He was elected party president in 2017. Three prominent civil society activists took leading roles in establishing GDP, built on their networks: Yang Saing Koma, Kem Ley and Yeng Virak. The original idea to

establish the party came from Kem Ley, a political analyst and grassroots organiser well-known from the media. One of Kem Ley's initiatives was the '100 nights mission' (Yut Tnea Kah 100 Reatrey), set up to identify issues facing those at the grassroots, such as border infringements and subsequent land loss, drug use, migration and poverty (Su 2016). This political activist did not take the leadership position in GDP because he decided to refrain from engaging in electoral politics, and to focus instead on research and on mobilising groups of young people to engage in social issues. Kem Ley was murdered in a public place in 2016, leaving his whole mission and all of the activities he had started behind (Norén-Nilsson 2019). After his death, GDP's popularity and its legacy suffered, and the party only received about 1.11% of votes in the 2018 election. Most of these votes were cast by people at the grassroots, within the communities in which the three senior civil society activists leading the party had been active.

The legacy of the GDP affects CEDAC, although Koma resigned from his position as its Executive Director in connection with his boundary crossing. After the 2013 national election, CEDAC was already facing difficulties in implementing its activities, due to growing suspicion on the part of government leaders and the surveillance of CEDAC training and local activities that resulted. CEDAC also lost one of its most important backers with the 2013 cabinet reshuffle, namely the replacement of Chan Sarun by Ouk Rabun as Minister of Agriculture. One FA leader interviewed as part of this study expressed the view that the most challenging aspect of community work is related to politics. He said that local authorities had been accepting of any communities that wanted to affiliate themselves with the government party, and that it was easy for these communities to implement their work. However, when he joined the GDP, the community as a whole faced threats and a lack of cooperation from local authorities:

> If we do not involve ourselves in politics, our voice will not be heard by the government. Politics means making the community strong and ensuring that people get more benefits from the government. It is like kids being hungry and crying, so their mothers will feed them. For the community, the price they get for their produce is low, there are not many markets for our produce, and the government does not care much about the agriculture sector. Hence, they will not care about us if we do not involve ourselves in politics. But if we do, they say that we are being political. In the past, when we were in the same political party, they thought everything

> that I did was good. When I became involved with another political party, they thought that this community belonged to that political party. They have not selected our community for capacity building and they have tried to make other community members stop believing in me.
>
> (Interview with a community leader in Kampot province, August 2019)

When he resigned from CEDAC, Koma took his staff with him, to work with him in the GDP (interview with CEDAC staff member in Phnom Penh, May 2019). CEDAC thus lost its experienced leader and many of its experienced members, and was left with young and relatively unexperienced staff members only (interview with front-line management staff at CEDAC in Phnom Penh, March 2019). Koma's political involvement also led to tension between CEDAC's stakeholders, including the government and donors. As a result, CEDAC became inactive, as it faced challenges in seeking new funding to support its activities, with the result that many projects stalled, and because the government's trust in the organisation had been damaged. However, CEDAC still tries to continue with its institutional mission and vision and still provides training, on, for example fertilisers, organic paddy rice, green farming and other related topics (interview with a community leader and CEDAC staff in Kampot province, August 2019).

GDP continued to garner little support, receiving only 0,09% in Cambodian's June 2022 commune elections. Dismayed by his limited influence over the agricultural sector, Yang Saing Koma defected to the ruling CPP in November 2022 and was immediately appointed to two government positions: Secretary of State of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), and Minister attached to the Prime Minister. Koma's boundary-crossing to the state illustrates the difficulty or impossibility for a non-government aligned civil society activist or opposition politician to enter the state as an apolitical technical expert. According to Koma, he had sought to resign from the GDP to be in charge of an agricultural programme as an independent expert, but was told by the Minister of Agriculture, Dith Tina, that he needed to join the CPP to hold the job (Ben 2022a). His defection is believed to have irreparably damaged negotiations to form a strong opposition coalition ahead of the 2023 national elections, and result in further defections from opposition parties to the ruling CPP (Ben 2022b).

CEDAC demonstrates the roles of knowledge, economic and social capital in promoting agricultural development in Cambodia, and the respective roles

and limitations of these forms of capital in building interactions with the state elite. It also sheds light on the limited possibilities available to influential civil society activists to expand their sphere of influence through boundary crossing to the political field, at least if they join an opposition party. The case study of CEDAC also highlights the negative consequences of poor management of organisational change, which can erode social legitimacy.

Amru Rice

Song Saran started out as an elite member of the civil society field, where he occupied dominant positions in a range of civil society sectors through his work in positions including secretary general of Cambodia Against Child Trafficking; at Save the Children Cambodia; and as project officer of the NGO Terre des Hommes. This civil society engagement provided social capital in the form of relationships with a wide range of key development actors in Cambodia, including donors and government officials, as well as with members of the rural population themselves, which facilitated his boundary crossing to become a member of the economic elite through Amru Rice.

The success it has achieved (economic capital) and the crucial role it has played for farmers (social capital) have brought Amru Rice and Saran acknowledgement locally and internationally (increasing social capital). In 2021, Saran became a member of the Cambodia Chamber of Commerce (CCC), a member of the board of directors of the Cambodia Investors Club Association (CiC) and the president of CRF (CRF). He won the Best White Rice Award in 2015 and the Takeda Foundation Young Entrepreneurship Award in 2016 (ResponsAbility Investments AG 2017). In 2018, he was awarded the Golden Agrow Award on behalf of the company, an honour presented by the ASEAN Business Advisory Council (Hor 2018). He is also often invited as a speaker in public discussions organised by NGOs and international organisations in Cambodia and abroad; he was, for example, invited to be part of a panel on responsible agricultural investment in the United Arab Emirates, together with ministers and high-level delegates at the World Investment Forum 2020 (UNCTAD 2018).

This capital has rendered the company a dominant private actor in the rice sector, one that draws support from various donors and the government. For example, the company partnered with the International Finance Cooperation (IFC), the Volunteer Services Organisation and Cambodia Agricultural Value

Chain in 2017 (Amru Rice 2019) to implement the Sustainable Rice Platform standards and practices within the company's supply chain (IFC 2017). Other partners have included the French Development Agency, Oxfam Cambodia, the Netherlands Development Organisation and the German Agency for International Cooperation, which have also helped the company in relation to technical matters (Amru Rice 2019). In 2018, the company was the first Cambodian exporter to receive an Exim-backed loan, of $345,400, to purchase a 3000-ton storage system (May 2020). In 2019, the company received a 15 million USD loan agreement from IFC to expand its exports (Thou 2019). It is noteworthy that the state-owned Agriculture and Rural Development Bank has been very active in requesting loans from the government to assist local rice millers in response to requests from CRF, where Saran is the president (ARDB 2020; Thou 2020).

Over the years, Amru Rice has emerged as a leading agri-business that serves the interest of rural farmers and contributes to the state's implementation of agricultural policy. This image has brought the company and Saran alike massive support from donors and the government and in turn makes the company even more influential in the rice sector. The central role of Amru Rice is illustrated in the decisions that farmers make to grow rice varieties. Despite the fact that there is an official state agricultural policy in place, a big, fast-growing rice-miller like Amru Rice can still dictate which rice varieties are grown by farmers. Rice farmers tend to refuse to grow the varieties that the government sponsors, because there is limited market demand for them and they fetch low prices. They prefer to grow the varieties that millers like Amru Rice want to buy (Green n.d.).

Elite actors within CEDAC and Amru Rice have used contrasting strategies in seeking to expand their respective spheres of influence in the agriculture field. While CEDAC has engaged in boundary crossing to the political field, Amru Rice has integrated itself into the economic field. This brings about different outcomes. Boundary crossing to the political field, particularly into opposition politics, is viewed as posing a challenge to members of the state elite, whereas boundary crossing to the economic field is viewed as an alignment with members of the state elite. As a result, CEDAC's social and economic capital has been depleted, whereas Amru Rice's social and economic capital has grown.

Conclusion

Cambodia remains an agrarian society in which the majority of the population lives in rural areas. Despite widespread agricultural commercialisation for export, many smallholder farmers are poor and rely on subsistence farming. They also face a number of challenges, including poor infrastructure, limited technology and extension services, and difficult access to credit and to markets. Together, these challenges have a negative impact on their productivity and income. It is for these reasons that the agriculture sector in Cambodia constitutes a key area for critical involvement on the part of actors within the civil society field, the state field and the economic field.

The above analysis suggests that knowledge, economic and social capital have been the main forms of capital mobilised in elite interaction. Elite individuals within the two organisations that were the focus of the two case studies gained elite status in a similar way, through providing capacity building for local farmers and mobilising them to produce agricultural produce for Cambodia's urban middle class and Chinese markets. The leaders of both organisations were thereby initially able to garner recognition and support from both the government and from international donors. However, they went on to develop their elite status in different ways. The case of Amru Rice exemplifies the fact that there can be an integration of the economic and the state elites. CEDAC, on the other hand, suggests the potential for a problematic relationship between civil society and state elites, should the former become involved in grassroots mobilisation on livelihood issues.

There is also a contrast between the boundary crossing strategies undertaken by the leaders of the two organisations to pursue their respective goals, resulting in different outcomes. While the leader of CEDAC boundary crossed to engage in electoral politics, to enhance his reach and impact, the leader of Amru Rice focused on business expansion. CEDAC's strategy of transforming grassroots social capital into national level political capital initially gained ground, but the use of violence and personal attacks on GDP leaders and activists had a chilling effect. Not only was the GDP crushed, but any CSOs and leaders involved in the movement came under strict state surveillance. Facing these challenges, CEDAC's former leader and GDP co-founder finally joined the ruling CPP so as to seek to influence the development of the agriculture sector from within the state. By contrast, the leader of Amru Rice received privileges and protection from the state. This success has been

achieved by engaging in the mode of development preferred by the state: elite actors within the economic field receive business advantages and unchecked support, and in return they make money available to the government and the ruling party to fund politicised development projects that secure votes. The leader of Amru Rice could thus establish himself in the elite beyond civil society, wielding broader influence in society. These case studies suggest that in an economically deprived and authoritarian context such as contemporary Cambodia, a key source of influence for civil society elites remains personal and hierarchical relationships of patronage and loyalty to state elites for maintaining their status and political support.

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CHAPTER 10

Boundary Crossers

Moving between Civil Society, State, Political and Economic Fields in Cambodia and Indonesia

Haryanto
Ignasius Jaques Juru
Astrid Norén-Nilsson

Civil society is mostly described as an autonomous entity, different from the state and economic fields (Cohen & Arato 1992; Dagnino 2011). However, the political dynamics in many countries urge a rethinking of the relationship between spheres. Latin America, for example, is a region in which many civil society actors actively engage with the state, and even become structurally integrated into the state. In social movement literature, this phenomenon is widely known as institutional activism (Abers & Tatagiba 2015; Abers 2020). In the Southeast Asian region, scholars from different disciplinary backgrounds have set out a research agenda on boundary crossing (Lewis 2008, 2013; Haryanto 2020; Norén-Nilsson & Eng 2020). The stream of activists who cross from civil society to other fields are here thought to be redrawing the boundaries between spheres.

This study finds that boundary crossing takes place in diverse civil society sectors, both in post-authoritarian Indonesia and in authoritarian Cambodia. The dynamics of boundary crossing in Cambodia and Indonesia highlight the fact that the civil society field, the political field, the state field and the economic field, though distinct, are interlinked and interdependent. Through boundary crossing, civil society elites experience an expansion of their engagement spaces. The state offers a strategic place in which boundary crossers

can engage in the policymaking process; the political field opens up space through which boundary crossers can become politically involved; while the economic field offers a social sphere in which elite members of civil society can strategically expand their economic influence.

Boundary crossing can be linear, multi-directional or cyclical, as elite actors step in and out of different fields. In this chapter, we are interested in boundary crossing from civil society to other fields. We argue that, despite the different political settings in Cambodia and Indonesia, in both countries the civil society field functions, for some activists, as a transitory field of power in which they can accumulate, mobilise and convert forms of capital, allowing them to move beyond the civil society field so as to expand their space of engagement. 'Transitory' here refers to the non-permanence of the field for the boundary crossers, who, through processes of capital accumulation, capital mobilisation and capital conversion, cross over to other fields. However, it is important to note that only a small segment of civil society activists become boundary crossers; most remain within the civil society field throughout their professional lives.

This chapter draws on data collected from the agriculture and youth civil society sectors in the case of Cambodia, and from the agrarian and anti-corruption sectors in the case of Indonesia. We ask: why, how and with what consequences do elite actors within civil society move into the state, political and economic fields? To answer these questions, this chapter is structured as follows. After a brief literature review on boundary crossing, we investigate the motivations for boundary crossing. We then outline the pathways of boundary crossing and compare the processes of capital accumulation and conversion involved. Finally, we discuss the political implications of this boundary crossing as well as propose a typology of boundary crossing.

Civil Society and Beyond: Actor Mobility and Field Permeability

The link between the state and civil society is typically perceived as one between two distinct entities. Whether civil society is seen as confronting the state, as in most accounts, or as working in tandem with the state, as in neoliberal versions (Dagnino 2011), civil society actors are understood to be different from, and to be acting outside of, the state (Rathzel et al. 2015). As Cohen & Arato (1992: 362) argue, CSOs, with their normative model in the societal realm, differ from the state and the economy.

However, the distinctness that is claimed to exist here cannot simply be accepted as fixed. The dynamic nature of actors' engagement with civil society and other fields, such as the state, is undeniable. In authoritarian settings, for instance, the participation of civil society in the state often follows societal incorporation or corporatist schemes (Jayasurya & Rodan 2007; Aspinall 2004). This goes back to the way in which, in the historical context of authoritarianism, the concept of civil society came to signify a set of social and political practices that sought to engage with state power, and thus was attractive to political agents pursuing a range of agendas (Chandhoke 2010: 175). Such dynamicity is only fortified by democratisation.

The intensity of state–civil society interactions may be attributed to several factors: first, civil society, in a historical context, has been positioned as a boon for democracy; second, civil society serves to conduct political engagement, either through participation or through representative mechanisms (Törnquist 2009); third, in the post-Washington Consensus era, states have been expected to share their functions with civil society organisations. This latter frame is identified by Carroll (2010: 2) as socio-institutional neoliberalism. The strong connection between the state and civil society, eventually and consequently, has resulted in the 'civil' part of civil society no longer being signified as non-political. Those inhabiting the sphere outside the state have the right to debate the nature of the state and the politics that it has pursued (Chandhoke 2010: 179).

The embeddedness of relations between state and civil society, in whatever form they take place, has drawn several scholars to explore the mobility of actors between these fields more comprehensively. David Lewis has made a comparative examination of the phenomenon of boundary crossers in three different countries: the United Kingdom, the Philippines and Bangladesh. He identifies two main types of boundary crossing: consecutive, in which a person moves from one sector to another to take up a new position; and extensive, in which a person is simultaneously active in multiple sectors (Lewis 2008). Boundaries between spaces are blurred, with many actors moving between spheres. Civil society actors can transform their roles and move between fields (see Chapter 1).

When civil society activists attempt to enter government, whether in order to pursue change from within or as part of co-opted corporatist incorporation, this process redraws the boundaries between civil society and the state. Consequently, neither civil society nor the state is self-contained or discrete.

Rather, the two are inter-permeable, and the relationship between them is enmeshed in a complex and multilayer network of material transactions, personal connections and organisational linkages (Lewis 2013: 29).

Boundary Crossing: Civil Society as a Transitory Field of Power in Indonesia and Cambodia

Civil society in Indonesia began a new, more dynamic chapter after the fall of the authoritarian Suharto regime, which was precipitated by its de-legitimation as a result of increased antagonism and mobilisation on the part of civil society (Aspinall 2004). In the post-New Order era, democratic spaces mushroomed at the local and national level (Lay 2017), offering opportunities for civil society organisations to incorporate their various issues and agendas into political agendas and processes. In Cambodia, by contrast, the civil society that was kick-started by international intervention in the 1990s has grown under overall authoritarian conditions. The state – highly suspicious of progressive elements – has sought to exert political control and has selectively integrated some civil society actors into its fold. Other influential civil society activists have remained independent, and have sometimes sought to challenge the state.

Although Indonesia and Cambodia have had different political trajectories, boundary crossing has taken place in both countries. Most boundary crossers in Indonesia began as student activists (Chapter 5) and with organising grassroots movements in the New Order era. Their critical engagement with the grassroots and with networks of critical intellectuals and activists influenced them to withdraw from the authoritarian state and engage in civil society, critically disposed toward the state. With the political transformation that took place in the post-Suharto era, boundary crossers started to reposition themselves vis-à-vis the state and political fields, which they now considered to be spaces through which to engage and push their agendas.

In Cambodia, the phenomenon of boundary crossing from civil society to the state and political fields has received less academic attention than in Indonesia. Nonetheless, high-profile boundary crossing by civil society activists into the field of electoral politics has built major electoral challenges for the authoritarian CPP, starting with the 2007 foundation of the Human Rights Party. Civil society boundary crossing into oppositional electoral politics was also an important dynamic following the contested 2013 elections, though this failed to gather public support (Norén-Nilsson 2019). In parallel, boundary

crossing to the CPP-controlled state became an opportunity for activists loyal to the government under the overall shift to hardening authoritarianism that those elections triggered. Through state-controlled umbrella organisations, activists have been co-opted into the state.

Boundary crossing takes place in many different subfields. Our case studies come from the agrarian, anti-corruption, agriculture and youth subfields. In Indonesia, civil society organisations in the agrarian and anti-corruption subfields were selected because we identified the fact that in those subfields a number of activists had crossed over into the state and political fields to advance their agendas. The agrarian and anti-corruption subfields trace their roots to New Order-era activism. As such, political-mindedness is deeply entrenched in these subfields, and both are invigorated by the logic of 'political change'.

The agrarian sector has experienced the most radical transformations. During the Sukarno era, this sector was a battlefield for class struggle (Rachman 2012), and agrarian reform was perceived as necessary in order to realise a socialist Indonesia. The political rupture of 1965 drastically and dramatically transformed this sector, and the New Order regime positioned the agrarian sector as a cornerstone of development. In this era, the phrase 'Land for Development' became commonplace (Bachriadi 2011; Rachman 2012). Since the 1980s, the agrarian subfield has encompassed a range of activists; it has been dominated by grassroots individuals, students and pro-reform activists (interview with Dianto Bachriadi, June 2019). In 1995, a group of agrarian activists established the Consortium for Agrarian Reform (Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria, KPA), to advocate for and develop an agenda on agrarian reform. They specifically called this 'agrarian by leverage', i.e. an agenda to strengthen the peasants' movement in bargaining with those in power (Rachman 2012: 83).

The anti-corruption subfield, though relatively new, has become a fundamental part of the political landscape in Indonesia. This subfield emerged at the height of the reform movement following the fall of Suharto, and became one of the main subfields advancing the democratisation agenda, which has taken clean governance as the main logic for its activism. Within this subfield, a reform agenda has been pushed intensively by activists through investigating elite corruption as well as through general anti-corruption advocacy (Setiyono & McLeod 2010).

In Cambodia, the agriculture subfield has provided a basis for boundary crossing following two main logics. First, agricultural civil society activists have linked rural livelihoods with agricultural development, triggering grassroots mobilisation over agricultural issues. Activists in the agriculture

subfield are thus deeply involved in organising at the grassroots, which has an inherent political logic and has opened the door for elite activists to cross to the political field. Second, the agriculture subfield operates through the logic of the market, with the consequence that leading civil society activists may accumulate economic capital, providing some with the opportunity to cross to join the elite in the economic field. The political economy of Cambodia's agricultural land management, which relies on the widespread privatisation of state or common land and its leasing to state-connected members of the economic elite, in turn relies on a close and mutually beneficial partnership between individuals within the economic and state elites.

The youth subfield, on the other hand, is defined by demographic and political developments within Cambodia (Chapter 5). As the population has become increasingly youthful, it has become a strategic subfield through which to contest and reinforce state power – including through boundary crossing. Youth associations in Cambodia have, since their emergence in the late colonial era, served as tools for state control of the young (Raffin 2012). Over various regimes, the state has instrumentally used a string of youth organisations to mobilise young people for their political projects and to counter perceived threats. Following the reintroduction of multi-party elections in 1993, the incumbent CPP has continued to rely heavily on youth organisations. Three of these are key: the Union of Youth Federations of Cambodia (UYFC), the Cambodia Scouts (CS), and the Cambodian Red Cross (CRC). These have in common the fact that they have the status of an NGO, yet are tied to the state. A pattern during the turn to a deeper form of authoritarianism has been that mass youth mobilisation through these organisations has been dramatically stepped up, at the same time as links with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MoEYS) have been strengthened (Norén-Nilsson 2021). In parallel, a large number of independent organisations and initiatives headed by and/or targeting young people emerged as part of independent civil society in the 1990s, focused on various issues such as capacity-building, critical thinking, environmental issues etc. These are vibrant, though viewed with increasing suspicion by the government.

Why? Motivations for Boundary Crossing

Boundary crossing is a controversial practice amongst civil society activists. It may reflect an endeavour to effect change from wherever may be most effective.

It may also result from co-optation by incumbent power-holders. One view therefore holds that civil society activists should maintain their distance from the state and political society so as to be able to criticise these freely (Ou & Kim 2013; Ichwanudin [ed.] 2010). Without denying that boundary-crossing can entail co-optation, our study has found that civil society elite activists whom we interviewed – whether they were activists loyal to or opposed to the power of the incumbent government – shared a motivation in common for entering the state or political field: they perceived that these fields were crucial for making policy and promoting change. This perspective, which downplays co-optation, may also reflect the fact that those activists who have strongly opposed the state have generally not been co-opted or welcomed into the state.

Through the lens of pro-democracy activists in Indonesia, boundary crossing is part of the 'go politics' strategy. As a part of 'go politics', boundary crossing is conceived of, by activists, as a means of achieving change from within or of creating a 'front' from within (Priyono & Nur 2009). Boundary crossers have tried to promote their causes not from the margins of civil society but from within the power centre of political institutions (Mietzner 2013).

Teten Masduki, an elite activist who is part of Indonesia Corruption Watch (ICW), has emphasised that, since the end of the New Order era, civil society actors have been increasingly driven to reposition themselves and to promote reform from within the state (interview with Teten Masduki, June 2019). His background in anti-corruption activism drove him to enter the state field, wherein he could champion his reform agenda. This has consistently underpinned his motivation, since he ran as a deputy governor candidate in the local election in the province of West Java in 2012. The motivation to change from within continued to influence Teten Masduki's support for Jokowi's candidacy in the 2014 presidential election in Indonesia. He believed that by joining the Jokowi camp he could promote a reform agenda, since Jokowi was widely known as a reformist candidate who did not come from Indonesia's established oligarchy.

The desire to become involved in policymaking and to bring about change from within also motivates elite actors in the agrarian sector. Usep Setiawan, an expert in agrarian reform within the presidential office, explained that:

> In demanding the expansion of agrarian reform, we cannot avoid becoming involved in the state. KPA understands and believes that agrarian reform

> is part of the national agenda. Who can implement it? The state. As such, I understand that it is unavoidable that activists enter the state, at least in the matter of agrarian reform.
>
> (Interview with Usep Setiawan, June 2019)

The experience of civil society elite actors in Cambodia is similar to that of those in Indonesia. In both the agriculture and the youth sectors, leading activists in our case studies emphasised the fact that the state offers the potential to create social change. Sroy Socheath, a co-founder of Perspectives Cambodia, viewed the position of General Director of Youth in the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MoEYS) as a step up, one that enabled her to enter policymaking after decades of effort. She emphasised the fact that her transition from civil society to the state had brought with it heightened responsibility:

> At the time [as a civil society activist], I was like a follower. Even though I was a leader, I led at a certain level. My minister asked me this question when he met me: 'Socheath, what is the difference between Socheath at the Ministry, Socheath at Paññāsāstra [University], and Socheath at UYFC?' I said, 'Minister, Socheath at Paññāsāstra was a very carefree Socheath. In Paññāsāstra, I had maybe 20,000 students to take care of, I had teachers to take care of, but at the end of the day I could always turn off my computer, have a nice dinner, turn off my phone and watch a nice movie, and I slept nicely. When I was at UYFC, I had a good group of young people. I did this part, they did that part, and the other people did the other part, and the president took responsibility. But here in the Ministry, because I'm in this position, with this title, I have to take care of everybody's responsibility.
>
> (Interview with Sroy Socheath, May 2019)

Working for the state extended her responsibility to the national level. At MoEYS, she could finally realise ideas that she had developed during her time as an activist:

> I'm here in the Ministry because I'm at the policy-maker level. I can actually involve my ideas more, and make my voice heard more. […] Usually, when you are outside, we talk with friends, like […] 'You know, when I have a chance I will do this, I will do that.'
>
> (Interview with Sroy Socheath, May 2019)

For Socheath, her position at the MoEYS was an opportunity to bring to bear her activist energy in order to influence Ministry officials to step up their work.

A similar view was expressed by Yang Saing Koma, an elite actor from CEDAC, who viewed his entry into the political field through the Grassroots Democracy Party (GDP) as offering him more opportunities to contribute than was possible in civil society. He hoped that by becoming involved in national politics he would be able to influence policy in a way that would bring real change for farmers. He felt that when he was working with CEDAC his reach and influence had been limited. In CEDAC, he said, he could help a limited number of farmers. Through winning an election and taking up a position in a future government, on the other hand, he would be able to help farmers nationwide (Kang 2015). When Yang Saing Koma later left the party he had co-founded to join the CPP-state, he was cited by a party colleague as similarly stating that this was in order to allow him to help the agricultural sector, "because only the government has the resources and power to implement this work" (Samban 2022).

The decision by elite members of civil society to boundary cross to the economic field was similarly motivated by a perception that they would be more effective there. Song Saran, Director of Amru Rice, explained his decision to boundary cross as having been prompted by a realisation that through setting up contract farming he could help poor farmers more effectively than he could working within civil society. This stemmed from the fact that in the private sector, unlike in civil society, he would be able to implement his own initiatives without having to rely on donor support. Song Saran characterised the private sector as 'a new world that is starkly different from CSOs, in that CSOs always wait for sponsors, while the private sector carries out their work independently, using their own capital' (interview with Song Saran, October 2019). The centrality of the state field and the strategic potential that it held for elite actors from civil society also influenced his decision to enter the economic field. Song Saran explained that through leaving civil society and entering the economic field he has become a successful state insider, one capable of advising the government and influencing its agricultural policy. In becoming a leading figure in the private sector in Cambodia, Saran mobilised his economic capital to become an *oknha* (tycoon), a title that institutionalises an elite pact between the Cambodian economic elite and the CPP leadership. An *oknha* receive business privileges and opportunities, in return for financial contributions to the CPP state (Verver & Dahles 2015). Saran now enjoys close relations with high-ranking government officials in powerful ministries including Commerce, Economy and Finance, and Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. He is also

President of the Cambodia Rice Federation, created in 2014, which serves as a lobby on behalf of the main elites within the rice export sector.

How? Pathways to Boundary Crossing

In this section, we contrast the pathways taken by civil society actors seeking to enter the political field and/or state field in Indonesia and Cambodia.

In Indonesia, our case studies indicate two patterns of boundary crossing. In the first, elite actors from civil society boundary cross both into the field of electoral politics and into the state field. They may enter the state field through electoral means, in order to become members of parliament or leaders in the executive branches of government; or, alternatively, they may leverage their capital accumulated in the state field to enter electoral politics. In the second, a person crosses into the state field as an appointed expert.

A boundary crosser may use the state field as a springboard into the political field, or vice versa. In the agrarian sector, the former pathway is exemplified by the case of Usep Setiawan. During the Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY) Presidency, Usep Setiawan entered the state field as a special National Land Agency (BPN) staff member (2006–2011). This process was grounded in the relationship that had been formed between KPA activists and the head of the BPN, Joyo Winoto. As an academic in Bogor Agriculture University, who supervised SBY's doctoral studies, Joyo Winoto had founded the Brighten Institute, together with SBY. Joyo Winoto was in a strategic position to enable KPA activists to generate an agrarian reform agenda in SBY's government. This process succeeded in achieving integration between elites, which was marked by the appointment of Usep Setiawan as a special staff member at BPN, tasked with helping to formulate an agrarian reform agenda. Following his entry into the state field, Usep joined the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P) in 2010. His involvement in electoral politics has been determined by two factors: first, the party's need to recruit cadres who have knowledge on agrarian issues; and second, the fact that the presence of activists within political parties facilitates the recruitment of other activists. In 2014, Usep became one of the legislative candidates from the electoral district of West Java XI. Though he was not elected, he came second in terms of obtaining party votes in his electoral district, with 25,000 votes (interview with Usep Setiawan, June 2019). In 2016, along with several other agrarian activists, he became an expert in Joko Widodo's Presidential Staff Office (KSP), covering agrarian affairs.

In the anti-corruption subfield, Teten Masduki exemplifies boundary crossing into the state field through the pathway of electoral politics. In 2012, he became a candidate for deputy governor of West Java in 2015, paired with Rieke Diah Pitaloka, a PDI-P politician with a background as an artist. He considered his involvement in the election process to be a collaboration between civil society and politicians (interview with Teten Masduki, June 2019). His closeness to PDI-P politicians paved the way for Teten to become involved in the political process at the national level. In the 2014 election, he became a supporter of Jokowi and played an important role in mobilising political volunteers to support Jokowi. He considered political volunteering as a form of electoral activity in which CSO activists must engage, so as to mobilise electoral support (interview with Teten Masduki, June 2019). His intensive involvement in this process opened up space for Teten to become Head of the Presidential Staff Office (KSP) in 2015. The KSP was established to provide support to the President and Vice President in controlling three strategic activities – namely, the implementation of national priority programmes, activities related to presidential political communication, and management of strategic issues (Kantor Staf Presiden n.d.).

Other activists cross over directly into the state field without entering electoral politics. This type of movement into the state field is essentially technocratic. In the case of the prominent anti-corruption activist Kanti, for example, the knowledge capital she acquired as an anti-corruption and legal aid activist has been important in working on good governance agendas in the state field. Since she was appointed to the Ministry of Environment's legal team in 2018, she has played a key role in promoting clean governance within the ministry, with an anti-corruption perspective. As she emphasised:

> When I moved there it didn't make me uncritical of their internal situation, I didn't care what they did to me, even if they hated me. Again, I didn't care! I do realise that I deal with corruption. So I think that the method should be changed from the outset. What was the point of joining the Ministry if I am going to continue to live with the negative practice of corruption in the office? So with my critical input, they are quite open. They are grateful that they finally know how ineffective the way in which they work is. (Interview with Kanti, May 2019)

In Cambodia, boundary crossing into the field of electoral politics has tended not to be paired with entry into the state field. This is because the

main dynamic for boundary crossing into the electoral politics field has been that boundary crossers establish opposition parties based on their grassroots networks. In the political stalemate that ensued from the CNRP's strong electoral performance in 2013, some civil society leaders proposed 'third-way politics' as a way of ending political polarisation, with the Grassroots Democracy Party (GDP) put forward as an electoral vehicle. Although the civil society leaders who ultimately formed the party's leadership represented different civil society sectors, the core leadership and much of the party's following consisted of activists from the agricultural organisation CEDAC, which Yang Saing Koma had founded and of which he had served as Director. In 2018, Yang Saing Koma ran as GDP candidate for Prime Minister.

Under hegemonic authoritarian rule, this kind of electoral political engagement has been fatally circumscribed. In 2017, opposition leader Kem Sokha of CNRP was arrested on charges of treason. The charges centre on foreign support for his mobilisation at the grassroots. The GDP, meanwhile, lost credibility by participating in the flawed elections of 2018, even though it only agreed to participate under strong pressure from the CPP (interview with Sam Inn, GDP Secretary General and former director of the NGO Life with Dignity, September 2018). Seven years after the establishment of the GDP, in November 2022, Yang Saing Koma left the GDP to join the ruling CPP, upon which he was rewarded with two government positions.

A different group of civil society elite activists, in general loyal to the CPP-controlled state, have entered the CPP-state directly. An important pathway here is through state-sponsored organisations and initiatives, which offer opportunities for individuals to build networks that run through the state machinery and facilitate boundary crossing. Many of these organisations and initiatives target young people. This pathway is exemplified by Sroy Socheath. Sroy Socheath built her career as a self-made member of the civil society elite, with a long history of volunteering for the Cambodian Red Cross and the Cambodia Scouts, as well as for the precursor to UYFC, the central committee of which she joined in 2012. Her work co-founding Perspectives Cambodia (PC) was the crowning achievement of her work within the civil society field. Minster of Education, Youth and Sports Hang Chuon Naron was so impressed with the PC that he hand-picked her for the position of Director General of Youth at the MoEYS. This exemplifies the way in which elite activists who emerge from these initiatives build key connections with patrons in the state, and may be rewarded with appointments in the state bureaucracy.

To sum up, patterns of boundary crossing in the two countries reflect the two contrasting political contexts. In the Cambodian political context, some leading civil society actors who were independent from the ruling CPP have joined and established political parties with a grassroots orientation. This reflects their alienation from and lack of faith in the possibility of civil society effecting change under the CPP. Defecting to the CPP is a necessary condition for these to apply their expertise from within the state. Meanwhile, those civil society activists loyal to the CPP may boundary cross to the CPP-state, including to technical positions. Conversely, in Indonesia, the involvement of elite members of civil society in electoral processes has taken place in the context of a liberal political system that offers actors the opportunity to engage with many political parties. Elite members of civil society have rarely established their own parties, but have chosen to become involved in parties whose national leaders are part of a powerful oligarchy. Almost all of the civil society actors who contest elections are involved in diverse mainstream parties (Ichwanuddin [ed.] 2010).

How? Processes of Capital Accumulation and Conversion

The crossing of elite activists beyond the civil society field is only possible when they accumulate capital within that field. This capital can then be converted, enabling them to access strategic positions within another field. Two forms of capital play a central role in the boundary crossing activities of elite members of civil society. The first, social capital, refers to the networks established within civil society or with actors outside the field. The second is knowledge capital, with which activists can create new opportunities.

In Cambodia, the social capital of influential civil society activists is created primarily through two channels: first, there is the capital created from above (through state networks); and second, there is the capital created through grassroots movements. Elite members of state-sponsored youth initiatives, for instance, accumulate social capital through their networks with the state. These networks have been created through volunteer involvement in state-sponsored programmes. Socheath, for instance, was able to enter the state field by volunteering in activities funded by the Cambodian People's Party and MoEYS. She recounted how she got to know the Minister, who handpicked her for the position of General Director of Youth, during her time as a UYFC activist and as the Director of Campus Administration at Paññāsāstra University of Cambodia:

> Sometimes he [the Minister of Education] visited the university, and he saw me there as the Director of Administration. I arranged his visits. I hosted his visits, so he knew me. And then, when he worked closely with UYFC, I was there, and he also knew me. And he said, 'Socheath, when I go around, I always see you. You are really everywhere.' And then I said – of course at the time I called him 'Your Excellency' –'Your Excellency, I have only one life. I don't know whether I have another life. What I know is that I have this life, and I have only 24 hours, but I want to spend it doing worthwhile things.' (Interview with Sroy Socheath, May 2019)

The accumulation of social capital through state networks is highly effective in facilitating the efforts of elite activists to enter the state field. Social networks at the grassroots level do not, in contrast, represent sufficient capital for boundary crossing into the state field in and of themselves. This suggests that, in Cambodia, social capital gained through networks in the state is the key factor that determines whether or not members of the civil society elite can enter the state field by non-electoral means. The central role of social capital gained through networks within the state also informs the entry of elite actors into the market field. Song Saran, aside from entering the market through the economic capital accumulated through his family business, developed his business to ensure access to the state field; this was made possible by the significant level of intervention on the part of the state, through financial aid programmes and other economic programmes.

Knowledge capital also plays a determining role for boundary crossing practices. In the case of Sroy Socheath, her volunteer involvement in a range of initiatives – including the UYFC and her creation of Perspectives Cambodia – earned her trust in her abilities. When recruiting her, the Minister of Education, Youth, and Sports explained the appointment by citing Socheath's wide-ranging experience and hard work in the civil society field. The Minister specifically requested that she create an initiative similar to Perspectives Cambodia through MoEYS. At the Ministry, Socheath has been able to apply her knowledge by setting up formal state programmes, including a National Youth Debate.

Elite members of the civil society field in Indonesia, unlike those in Cambodia, have accumulated capital in a way that has been relatively independent of the state and political fields. Social and knowledge capital in Indonesia have been generated primarily through the networks and experience of boundary crossers within the civil society field itself. The process of capital accumulation

has been rooted in their activism and political engagement. Teten Masduki, for instance, accumulated his social and knowledge capital after becoming involved in networks associated with a 'third-world movement', which consisted of progressive intellectuals (interview with Teten Masduki, June 2019). Teten then broadened his networks and accumulated legal knowledge by joining the Legal Aid Institute Foundation (Yayasan Lembaga Bantuan Hukum, YLBHI) in 1989. He remained a member of YLBHI until 1998. Since 1998 – the height of Reformasi – Teten, as the first leader of ICW, has accumulated social and knowledge capital within the anti-corruption subfield. His central position in ICW has enabled him to gain more knowledge on anti-corruption and to broaden his networks. This has, of course, been made possible because of the institutional support he has received through ICW, which consists of experts ranging from economists to lawyers, who analyse corruption cases. Moreover, ICW is also underpinned by young activists who have graduated from prominent universities in Indonesia (interview with Teten Masduki, June 2019). This highlights the fact that ICW has contributed significantly to the accumulation of his individual capital. His strong network and his knowledge on anti-corruption were also accumulated through his strategic position as secretary-general on Transparency International-Indonesia (TI-I) in 2008–2012. His engagement in the anti-corruption sector has led to international recognition for Teten. In 2004 he received the Stars of Asia Opinion Shapers award from BusinessWeek and in 2005 he received the Ramon Magsasay Award.

It was his accumulation of social capital and knowledge capital, ultimately, that determined Teten's ability to cross boundaries. His reputation as an anti-corruption activist meant that a political party asked him to run as a candidate in an electoral race (as mentioned above), and it also paved the way for him to engage in a presidential election by mobilising his networks through a volunteer movement. His contribution to the electoral process led to his being appointed chief of the Presidential Staff Office during Jokowi's first term. During the second term of Jokowi's Presidency, Teten Masduki was appointed Minister of Cooperatives and Small/Medium Enterprises in 2019.

The process of capital accumulation in the agrarian sector resembles that in the anti-corruption sector. A boundary crosser accumulates social and knowledge capital through long-standing civil society activism. Usep Setiawan, for instance, has accumulated his social and knowledge capital through his active involvement in the agrarian reform movement. This involvement

has created the networks that he has at the grassroots and those that he has with intellectuals who have made a significant contribution to debates relating to the agrarian sector in Indonesia. This process of capital accumulation led to his being appointed chairman of the land committee at the National Land Agency under President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY). This marked the beginning of Usep's boundary crossing into the state field. His capital in the agrarian subfield was also mobilised and converted to enable him to cross over into the political field. He became a member of PDIP in 2010 and ran as a candidate for the national legislature in the 2014 election. Under President Jokowi, Usep joined the Presidential Staff Office as an expert on agrarian reform. He entered the state field for two reasons: because his network of CSOs had supported Jokowi during the 2014 election; and because of collective efforts to promote agrarian reform in Jokowi's government.

Political Implications

Boundary crossing performed by elite members of civil society have far-reaching political implications. By entering the state field, elite actors from Indonesian civil society have had the opportunity to become involved in policymaking processes. In the era of President SBY (2004–2014), a boundary crosser from KPA was able to promote national agrarian reform through the National Land Agency (Badan Pertanahan Nasional, BPN). Between 2006 and 2011, Usep – as a special staff member – pushed BPN to promote the drafting of government regulations regarding agrarian reform, which would put into practice Decree No. 9 of the People's Consultative Assembly passed in 2001 (interview with Usep Setiawan, June 2019). However, this draft had yet to become law by the end of SBY's presidency, as there was a fundamental change during his mandate period from the agrarian reform agenda to a land titling agenda, influenced by the ideology of neoliberalism (Rachman 2011). Under Jokowi (2014–), elite individuals from civil society continued to promote agrarian reform and sought to make it a government priority. Ultimately, they were successful, and Jokowi incorporated agrarian reform as a high priority within his national programme (although other groups working towards agrarian reform are critical of this programme). Five aspects of agrarian reform were identified: conflict resolution, land redistribution, asset legalisation, community empowerment and institutionalisation.

Although agrarian reform has been a stated priority of the government of Indonesia since the SBY era, it has not been implemented. This may be attributed to a great deal of economic and political contestation around agrarian resources (Afiff & Rachman 2019), as well as to the market ideology that is incorporated into state policy. As noted by Dewi Kartika, the Secretary-General of KPA (2016–), policies have been market-oriented under both SBY and Jokowi. Ultimately, these policies have promoted the distribution of land certificates.

> Both SBY and Jokowi are oriented towards a free land market. Why? Because of land certification, something that has been highlighted by both leaders as a success story. The SBY and Jokowi regimes both promised agrarian reform. SBY promised a more far-reaching reform, 16.2 million hectares; Jokowi promised 9 million. However, in the end, it resulted only in the distribution of land certificates.
>
> (Interview with Dewi Kartika, June 2019)

In the agrarian reform agenda championed by the KPA, on the other hand, agrarian reform is not reduced to a land titling agenda in the form of distribution of land certificates, but goes beyond this to address agrarian inequality structures and issues of social justice (Rachman 2012: 3; interview with Dewi Kartika, June 2019)

The failure of activists working within the state field to bring about fundamental changes in the agrarian sector has resulted in serious debate among activists regarding the presence and role of boundary crossers into the state field. Dianto Bachriadi, one of the original founders of the KPA, has been sharply critical of boundary crossers from the agrarian sector.

> It is not enough for me to say that Jokowi's certification programme is wrong. It's not enough! If it's wrong, then you have to reject it. What is the exact meaning of refusing? This means that you should withdraw all your wagons from the state field. That shows consistency. And that can only be done by one who is consistent, ideologically.
>
> (Interview with Dianto Bachriadi, June 2019)

He considered agrarian activists who are currently close to the Jokowi regime to be an indication of co-optation of the agrarian movement by the regime (interview with Dianto Bachriadi, June 2019).

The different attitudes of agrarian activists towards the adoption of a political strategy to advance agrarian reform has opened up bitter fragmentation

among them. This fragmentation sees a divide between groups that support the boundary crossing process as a form of critical collaboration with state actors so as to influence policymaking in the agrarian sector, poised against groups that view the agrarian reform agenda as belonging to the people's movement, and boundary crossing to the state as entailing co-optation.

In the anti-corruption sector, the presence of anti-corruption activists in the state field is critically questioned in a similar fashion by anti-corruption activists outside of it. In connection with the sharp debate that took place in relation to the revision of Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) Law Number 30 of 2002, which is currently being replaced by KPK Law Number 19 of 2019, anti-corruption activists from ICW made serious criticisms of several anti-corruption activists within the state on their social media. One of the photos that was put up on social media, for example, was posted with the accompanying sarcastic remark: 'Wanted, Teten Masduki, a former anti-corruption activist who went missing because he was too close to the palace.' This shows activists' disillusionment over the inability of their fellow anti-corruption activists within the state to protect and guard the anti-corruption agenda (Movanita 2019).

Criticism by civil society actors who remain outside of the political and state fields regarding the limited contribution of boundary crossers generally takes this limited contribution as a strong indication of co-optation. Although they recognise the fact that civil society elite activists who enter the state or political arenas may be motivated to pursue change from within, they consider co-optation hard to avoid. This is due to Indonesia's oligarchic political structure, an unconducive political environment for change from within. Boundary crossers are therefore understood to typically be absorbed into the existing political structure. Consequently, critics identify the most negative impact of boundary crossing in Indonesia as a weakening of commitment and a loss of consistency in idealism (Ichwanuddin [ed.] 2010: 252).

In Cambodia, the political implications of the entry of elite activists from civil society into electoral politics have varied hugely over time, within an overall authoritarian context. Cambodia during the period 1993–2017 corresponded to Schedler's definition of competitive electoral authoritarianism, in which the electoral arena 'is a genuine battleground in the struggle for power', but in 2017/2018 it moved to hegemonic electoral authoritarianism, in which the electoral arena 'is little more than a theatrical setting for the self-representation and self-reproduction of power' (Schedler 2002: 47).

Under relatively free, competitive authoritarian conditions, boundary crossing turned out to be highly effective. In 2007, Kem Sokha established the Human Rights Party (HRP), with its roots in the Cambodian Centre for Human Rights (CCHR). HRP merged with the Sam Rainsy Party in 2012, forming the Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP) – the most formidable challenge encountered by the incumbent CPP in its four decades of rule. CNRP's strong performance in 2013 is attributable to a variety of factors, including shifting horizons on citizenship (Norén-Nilsson 2019); weaknesses in the CPP's patronage system (Norén-Nilsson 2016; Loughlin 2020); rampant land grabbing (Loughlin & Milne 2020); and a failure to connect with young people (Eng & Hughes 2017). The CCHR organised events to voice popular grievances, most importantly the 'public forums' that were set up throughout the country since 2002. In interviews, former staff members deemed these public forums to have been crucial for the later emergence of rural anti-CPP mobilisation (interviews with former staff members of CCHR, May 2019). The HRP provided an electoral vehicle through which activists amassed these grievances and carried them into the electoral arena, contributing to the unprecedented electoral performance of the opposition in 2013.

Cambodia's transition to hegemonic authoritarianism, as embodied in the flawed elections of 2018, is best understood as having been set in motion by the 2013 elections, which prompted the CPP to pause and rethink its strategies while simultaneously rebuilding its bases (Loughlin & Norén-Nilsson 2021). The inter-election period was at once a democratic moment, in which new political possibilities could be envisaged, and a period of intense authoritarian strategising for the CPP. In this context, civil society leaders established the Grassroots Democracy Party (GDP) as an attempt to articulate a new vision of grassroots democratic politics, born out of civil society experience and know-how. The GDP differed from the HRP in two respects: the degree to which it carried itself as a party born out of and representative of civil society across different sectors (whereas the HRP emphasised human rights advocacy); and, linked to this, the sense in which it sought to spread a technocratic vision of politics.

However, the influence of the GDP on national politics has been marginal. The party performed poorly in the commune elections in 2017, winning only 0.07% of the vote, which reflected the limited appeal of the technocratic agenda that they presented to an electorate polarised between the CPP and the CNRP. In the national elections of 2018, on the other hand, any electoral challenge to the CPP – with the CNRP now outlawed by the hegemonic

authoritarian regime – appeared to be a tacit approval of the election, and thereby of the regime itself. The GDP took part only reluctantly, under strong co-optation. Under current conditions, any party that does not have the endorsement of parts of the former CNRP leadership will only ever be able to form a muted counterpoint to the CPP.

The second set of political implications stems from the crossing of elite activists from state-sponsored civil society organisations to the state. The creation of networks running through the state and state-sponsored mass organisations has been a constant throughout CPP rule, ever since the party (in a previous incarnation) came to power in 1979. These state-sponsored organisations have, however, risen in importance with the shift from competitive to hegemonic authoritarianism. The period since 2013 has seen a novel emphasis on youth-focused mass organisations that are closely linked to the CPP (Norén-Nilsson 2021), which have expanded not only in scale and reach, but also in organisational form (with the creation of many spin-off initiatives). These are marked by novel forms of interlinkages with party and state structures and are best understood as an authoritarian strategy to expand the CPP's presence within the population while simultaneously constraining contestation, by co-opting them into CPP-approved avenues. In this context, boundary crossing into the state on the part of elite activists serves to reinforce power networks within the new generation, excluding activists from organisations that are not endorsed by the state – as well as most of society.

Boundary crossing in Cambodia, unlike that in Indonesia, has not, per se, resulted in a fragmentation of civil society. Boundary crossing has played out in the context of a largely bifurcated civil society – split into an independent civil society comprising advocacy NGOs that cross into oppositional electoral politics; and a civil society closely enclosed by the authoritarian state, elite members of which are integrated into the state. Within this overall context, defection to the CPP remains a possibility for independent civil society activists who wish to cross to the state.

Typology of Boundary Crossing

From this analysis, it is possible to construct a typology of boundary crossers from civil society to categorise these and distil their range of experiences. We include two distinct dimensions of boundary crossing: the pathways of boundary crossers; and their political orientation. We build up a typology

Table 10.1 Typology of boundary crossing

	State field	Political field	State and political fields	Economic field
Advocacy-based orientation		Cambodia (Yang Saing Koma/GDP); Indonesia (Usep Setiawan)	Indonesia (Usep Setiawan)	
Technocratic orientation	Indonesia (Kanti)		Indonesia (Teten Masduki)	Cambodia (Song Saran)
Societal incorporation	Cambodia (Sroy Socheath)			

from these two dimensions because they provide a useful picture of the plurality of forms that boundary crossing takes.

The pathways of boundary crossers include several trajectories: boundary crossing from civil society to the state field, to the political field, to the state and political fields, and to the economic field.

Conclusion

Boundary crossing practices in Cambodia and Indonesia challenge the old dictum that civil society and other spheres are discrete and self-contained. Our study shows that boundary crossing blurs the border between already permeable spheres. We find that there are similarities and differences between the two countries in how elite activists from civil society boundary cross, in terms of their pathways, their motivations, and the ways in which they accumulate and convert capital. First, for elite members of Indonesian civil society boundary crossing to the electoral politics field is typically accompanied by boundary crossing to the state. Civil society activists may also cross directly into the state field. In Cambodia, by contrast, boundary crossing tends to be either into the field of electoral politics or into the state field – though defecting to the CPP remains a possibility to move from opposition politics to the state field. Second, in both countries, elite activists from civil society whom we interviewed typically based their motivations for boundary crossing in a belief that the state, political and economic fields enable more effective engagement than the civil society field to achieve impact in relation to social

change. However, activists crossing to the state field have been subject to, and vulnerable to, criticism alleging co-optation. Third, elite activists from civil society accumulate and mobilise their forms of capital differently in the two countries. In our Cambodian case studies, capital was accumulated either through a grassroots movement or within state-sponsored civil society. In the post-authoritarian context in Indonesia, by contrast, the process of capital accumulation was relatively free from state intervention.

Boundary crossing in the two countries has had specific political implications. In Indonesia, boundary crossing has not only impacted on the policy-making process but has also moulded conflictual relations within civil society, in that it has led to fragmentation between members of the civil society elite who have moved into the state field and those working outside of it. In Cambodia, boundary crossing has not, per se, resulted in a fragmentation of civil society. Rather, boundary crossing has reflected and reinforced a division that already existed, between an independent civil society whose elite members have crossed into oppositional electoral politics with varying degrees of success; and a civil society that is closely intertwined with the authoritarian state, whose elite members have been able to take on policy-making positions.

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PART 4

CONCLUSION

CHAPTER 11

Conclusion

Elites in and beyond Civil Society Fields

Astrid Norén-Nilsson
Amalinda Savirani
Anders Uhlin

Civil society, understood as a social sphere between the state and the market, has been a key concern in social research since at least the 1980s. Self-organising, non-profit actors are generally believed to have the potential to make important social, economic and political contributions. Such civil society actors may provide answers as to how to meet major societal challenges, contribute to economic development and social welfare, promote democratisation and provide a counterbalance and check on excessive state power. Much research has analysed how civil society actors succeed or fail in delivering all these 'public goods'. In Southeast Asia, the region on which we are focusing in this book, there have been high expectations of the positive role of civil society in socio-economic and political life. This is the case both under authoritarian regimes, such as contemporary Cambodia, and in a democratising context, such as in post-Soeharto Indonesia. Whereas we know a lot about power relations between state and civil society in these (and other) countries, civil society research has not paid sufficient attention to power relations and inequalities within civil society. In this book, we argue that a focus on processes of elitisation offers a new perspective on power dynamics in civil society as well as on relations between civil society on the one hand and the state and political and economic society on the other. Understanding how and why certain people manage to advance to dominant positions within civil society and then to also gain influence beyond civil society, and how they interact with members of elites in other sectors, and how and why they sometimes even move on to leading positions within the state, political parties, or within the economic

sphere, is important for a more comprehensive and sharper understanding of the wider socio-economic and political role of civil society.

We have found field analysis to be the most promising approach within elite research. When applied to civil society, this relational analytical approach allows us to capture power relations and dynamics within and beyond civil society fields; and in particular to gain an understanding of what kinds of capital are at play when civil society elites emerge and when leading activists move on to other fields. We also maintain that our research on civil society elites contributes to elite research by focusing on a social sphere that has, so far, been largely neglected within elite studies.

This concluding chapter revisits the main findings of the contributions to the book. In the introductory chapter, we formulated three overarching research questions to guide our study: How are civil society elites formed? How do elites in civil society interact, or even integrate, with other elite groups in politics, economics and the state? How does reliance on foreign funding influence processes of elite formation and interaction? Here we address these questions in light of the insights from the different chapters. In doing this we highlight differences and similarities across countries and civil society sectors, thus spelling out the comparative perspectives that have been explicit in some chapters, but only implicit in others. Moreover, we draw on our rich empirical analyses to theorise civil society elites. We also point out the implications of our studies for research on civil society in Southeast Asia. Finally, we discuss some possible policy implications of our study.

Main Findings

To many civil society researchers and practitioners, the notion of a 'civil society elite' is a contradiction. This book demonstrates how an elite perspective can shed new light on both the internal and the external dynamics of civil society, highlighting power inequalities within and beyond civil society. This is the first systematic study of elites within civil society in Southeast Asia. In this section we synthesise the findings of the chapters of the book in order to provide elaborated answers to our main research questions.

How are Civil Society Elites Formed?

The case studies in this volume have shown how civil society elites emerge and are reproduced through processes of recruitment and socialisation. Some CSOs, such as the Legal Aid Institute (LBH/YLBHI) and anti-corruption

CSOs ICW and FITRA in Indonesia, have developed formalised processes for the recruitment and training of new members and leaders, as described by Santoso and Wardhani (Chapter 7). The central activity of the youth organisation Perspectives Cambodia (PC) is a public speaking contest, which serves as a way of recruiting, training and socialising new elite activists (Chapter 5). Elite formation is less formalised in the Cambodian youth organisation Politikoffee, which is organised as an informal discussion forum, and in the Indonesian youth organisation Ketjilbergerak, which takes the form of a community and is not registered as an organisation. While lacking the formal training programmes of future leaders that the larger and more formalised CSOs run, these informal civil society groups still socialise members to become new leaders through the participation in everyday activities. Informal processes of elite formation are especially common in civil society networks such as the forest conservation movements in Cambodia analysed by Hok and Norén-Nilsson in Chapter 6. In cases such as this one, appointment by the leader appears to replace elections to leadership positions and some leaders, in this case study, did not even seem to know whether or not they were part of a steering group. The case studies in this book demonstrate the variety of types of elite formation, ranging from formal recruitment and training programmes to socialisation through everyday activities and informal appointment of new leaders by the current leadership. Through such processes, certain individuals reach dominant field positions, providing them with disproportionate power and influence that go beyond their own organisations and networks.

The formation of elites is best understood in relation to different types of capital and the respective value that they hold in the field in question. Possession of capital is what differentiates elite actors from those who are not elite actors. Social and knowledge capital are important in all cases covered in the book, whereas economic capital appears to be less significant. There is also a specific form of symbolic capital, namely religious capital, at play in the case of the Monks' Community Forest (MCF) in Cambodia (Chapter 6). The case studies, moreover, demonstrate how prominent civil society figures combine different types of capital to strengthen their position. In the case of youth-led CSOs as explored by Norén-Nilsson and Savirani in Chapter 5, we see how students, with their knowledge capital, accumulate other types of capital throughout their time as university students. Processes of elite formation in this kind of youth organisation are similar across Cambodia and Indonesia in terms of the central role of founders of the organisations and the

importance of social capital and knowledge capital for gaining civil society elite status. However, they differ in terms of how social capital is accumulated. In the Cambodian cases, social capital is mainly generated through networks that reach outside of civil society. Such networks either include the state, as in the case of PC, or draw on trust based on integrity from state oversight, as in the case of Politikoffee. In the Indonesian cases, social capital is built mainly through networking with other CSOs. Hence, a specific mechanism for accumulating social capital is to expand activities either into the political field, i.e. into political parties (as in the Cambodian case) or into wider networks of CSOs (as in the Indonesian case). The interaction of leading civil society activists with elite actors in other fields, or subfields, is key to the accumulation of more types of capital among civil society elite activists (see section on elite interaction and integration below).

Several case studies show how important the founders of a CSO can be for the reproduction of elites within their organisation and beyond. This is very clear in the case of university-based youth organisations analysed in Chapter 5, where several distinct generations can be identified within the elite. The Cambodian forest conservation networks analysed in Chapter 6 also provide examples of founders who control the reproduction of elites within their networks. Other examples are those individuals who can be said to be members of a 'hyper-elite', who have established CSOs that have shaped the human rights and anti-corruption fields in Indonesia (Chapter 7).

The formation of civil society elites in Cambodia and Indonesia has followed different historical trajectories in the two countries. Some of the current generation within the Indonesian civil society elite emerged from the pro-democracy movement during the authoritarian regime of Soeharto, although some civil society fields, such as the anti-corruption sector, did not develop until the time of post-authoritarian reform, though its activists have strong roots in the opposition to Soeharto's authoritarian regime. As analysed by Samadhi and Abhiseka in Chapter 4, the *reformasi* era was a period of political momentum for the development of civil society in Indonesia. In Cambodia, modern civil society emerged in the triple transition during the 1990s and was highly donor-driven. The increasingly authoritarian context in Cambodia since 2013 has further restricted and shaped civil society in the country, as explained in Chapter 3. These different trajectories of democratisation and autocratisation provide different contexts for the processes of civil society elite formation in the two countries. In the youth civil society fields,

for example, Chapter 5 shows how different patterns of elite formation are linked to competing agendas of critical thinking, which are intended to shape the political and social analysis of youth. As noted above, the key forms of capital for becoming an elite activist are the same in the two countries: social capital and knowledge capital. However, whilst in authoritarian Cambodia interactions with members of the state and political elites are essential in order to become an elite youth civil society activist, in post-authoritarian Indonesia elite interaction beyond the civil society field is rare among urban, university-based youth organisations and elite status tends to rely more on safeguarding autonomy from the state and from political parties. However, this finding only pertains to the youth field in the urban context. Within many other civil society fields or sectors, members of the Indonesian civil society elite strengthen their elite status through interaction with members of the state and/or political elites. The process of democratisation in Indonesia has created opportunities for such interaction that may avoid the co-optation inherited in similar interactions in authoritarian Cambodia.

In sum, civil society elites are formed through formal processes of recruitment and training as well as through informal socialisation via engagement with established elite actors. In these processes, different types of capital are acquired and used. For civil society elite actors – unlike for many other types of elite actors – economic capital tends to be the least important form of capital. Instead, social capital (in the form of personal networks) and knowledge capital (i.e. certain field-specific skills and competencies) are the most important forms of capital, when advancing into elite positions. Elite reproduction is typically controlled by incumbent elite actors, usually the founders of the CSO in question. Processes of elite formation follow different national trajectories, closely linked to processes of democratisation and autocratisation. Moreover, elite interaction beyond the civil society field may play an important role for the formation of civil society elites. This is the issue to which we now turn.

How do Civil Society Elites Interact, or Even Integrate, with Other Elite Groups in Politics, Economics, and the State?

Interaction between civil society elite activists and elite actors from other fields in the two countries varies in scope and intensity, from limited and irregular at one end of the spectrum (Chapter 8) to practices of boundary crossing at the

other (Chapters 8 and 9). For those civil society elite activists who have moved between fields, Haryanto, Juru and Norén-Nilsson in Chapter 10 find that the civil society field functions as a space in which to accumulate, consolidate and mobilise forms of capitals, in order to move beyond the civil society field. In both countries, despite the differences in political systems, boundary crossing is generally motivated by a perception that the state field and political fields are more efficient fields of action in which to promote the changes that civil society activism is aimed at achieving. Foreign donors also push members of the Indonesian civil society elite towards the state arena under the banner of 'changing from within', so as to assure a more sustainable and systemic intervention.

Interactions and integration take place at both local and national levels. In Chapter 8, Haryanto, Rahmawati and Lay analyse local-level interactions in Indonesia, contrasting the case of the Ininnawa Community in Makassar, a community focused on youth and culture, and that of Bengkel APPeK in Kupang, a professional NGO. Ininnawa interacts predominantly with other NGOs with a similar orientation; interactions with members of the state elite were limited to issue-specific ones at the suborganisational level. However, some of the Ininnawa elite activists, driven by their own personal motivations, have crossed the boundary into the state field or into the political field. Bengkel APPeK, on the other hand, has established strong 'symbiotic' ties with members of the state elite, and several of its leaders have moved into the state field to influence policy-making processes on development issues and to provide technical assistance to government staff, while also interacting pragmatically with political elite actors. These different patterns suggest that at least three factors shape local-level interactions: type of CSO, type of civil society sector, and type of local context. As for the type of CSO, Bengkel APPeK is a professional NGO, oriented towards implementing the local government's development programmes and providing basic services to local residents, and therefore has an interest in accessing key development actors. As a community, Ininnawa is oriented towards producing knowledge to promote social transformation and therefore works directly with villagers and other marginalised groups. When it comes to type of sector, Bengkel APPeK focuses on poverty alleviation in line with the local government policy orientation, whereas Ininnawa promotes the production of knowledge and critical thinking. As for the local context, Bengkel APPeK is located in East Nusa Tenggara – a province with a high poverty rate, where NGOs tend to focus on development. Makassar, on the other hand, is a trading hub where activists engage in a plurality of issues. The context of

economic development contributes to the form of organisation and the sector, and thereby to the way in which leading activists from the two organisations relate to other elite groups (Chapter 8).

The case study in Chapter 9 focusing on elite interaction and integration in the agricultural field in Cambodia highlights the difficulty faced by independent civil society actors in an authoritarian context in interacting with members of the state elite. The two key elite figures who are discussed in the study both originated as civil society leaders, and neither of them had a close relationship with the state. The different paths taken by these influential civil society leaders illuminate broader patterns of elite interaction. The activist who moved into oppositional politics has been publicly denounced by government leaders, and has not only had limited political success but has also seen the CSO he founded meeting with increasing suspicion and distrust on the part of the state. Finally, he defected to the ruling Cambodian People's Party and was rewarded with government posts. Another prominent civil society leader moved into the economic field. Passing to the economic field, he has been able to interact closely with members of the state elite. This points to the power inequalities that exist between the civil society field, the economic field and the political field in interactions with the state elite.

The same forms of capital that are key to becoming a civil society elite actor in the two countries – social capital and knowledge capital – are also key for enabling elite interaction and boundary crossing. This is demonstrated in the Indonesian cases. In Ininnawa, leaders mobilise knowledge capital accumulated from knowledge- and advocacy-based activism, as well as social capital stemming from networks reaching outside of Makassar, in their interactions with state and political elites. For leading activists from Bengkel APPeK, it is their social and knowledge capital that has made them worthy development partners for members of the state elite (Chapter 8). In the case of CEDAC in Cambodia, Yang Saing Koma's boundary crossing to the political and state fields is enabled by the knowledge capital on agriculture that he has accumulated from his civil society activism, as well as his social capital stemming from links with the grassroots and the popularity that he has earned from CEDAC innovations. In the case of Amru Rice, the importance of economic capital earned through remarkable business growth and donor support, alongside that of knowledge and social capital earned through being an innovative business leader who serves as a benefactor for rural smallholder

farmers, is highlighted in the analysis of how the leader has been integrated into the state elite (Chapter 9).

However, the processes of capital accumulation, differ between Cambodia and Indonesia, indicating that the structure of the civil society fields in the two countries vary between their overall authoritarian versus democratic contexts which has resulted in diverging patterns of elite interaction. In Indonesia, capital accumulation is found to be relatively independent of the state and political fields. Social capital is produced through civil society activism, through networks with grassroots and other civil society leaders (Chapters 5 and 10). In Cambodia, on the other hand, social capital is of two different kinds: either gained from above through networks running across the state, or alternatively through grassroots movements (Chapters 9, 10) or other networks of trust distinguished by their integrity from state oversight (Chapter 5). Unlike in Indonesia, interactions with state and political elites are therefore crucial for Cambodian elite activists (Chapter 5).

The nature of the resulting elite interactions also differ. In Indonesia, interactions between members of the civil society elites and members of the state elite and the political elite have been transformed from antagonistic, prior to democratisation, to symbiotic in the post-authoritarian period (Chapter 8), although many CSOs continue to maintain their distance from the state field. In Cambodia, on the other hand, civil society is divided. Elite activists, when linked to grassroots mobilisation, tend to have a problematic relationship with the state elite. On the other hand, civil society elite actors may, in exceptional cases, cross the boundary to the economic field to benefit from the closer and friendlier relations that economic elite actors enjoy with the state elite (Chapter 9). The symbiotic relationship between tycoons (*oknha*) and the state can be understood as one mechanism contributing to the 'protection pact' (Slater 2010) that upholds the authoritarian state. This underscores the key role of the state within an authoritarian context in determining the possibilities of action within different fields, and for regulating the success of any boundary crossing enterprise.

The different political trajectories of the two countries are also visible in the fact that the most significant pathways to boundary crossing are different in the two countries. In Indonesia, boundary crossing is typically either both to the political field and the state; or to the state field directly, through the appointment of experts. The liberal political system has meant an opportunity to engage with many political parties across the board, resulting in a situation

in which civil society elite activists are involved in a plurality of mainstream political parties. Though some have created their own political parties, these have lacked sufficient political and economic capital to form a challenge to the government. In Cambodia, elite activists have typically crossed either to opposition parties or the state. Boundary crossing has played out along the lines of an already bifurcated civil society, split into independent civil society crossing into oppositional electoral politics; and a civil society endorsed by the authoritarian state, the members of whose elite are integrated into the state elite. Some independent civil society actors have founded or joined grass-roots-oriented opposition parties, reflecting their lack of faith in the ability to effectuate change unless there is a change in government. Civil society activists who are aligned with or defect to the ruling party may, on the other hand, move straight into the state by appointment, and it is less rare for them to join as elected members of parliament.

The differences in political system between the two countries are also reflected in divergent political implications of elite interaction and integration. Within the Indonesian civil society elite there is a division between those who support boundary crossing as a form of critical collaboration with state actors and those who believe that civil society actors should stay outside of the state. This divide is fuelled by activists' failure to promote fundamental change in the agrarian sector (Chapter 10). In Cambodia, boundary crossing into electoral politics had important political implications under relatively free, competitive authoritarian conditions. This significance is eroding with the shift to a deeper form of authoritarianism. Another set of political implications stems from the crossing of members of civil society elites from state-sponsored civil society to the state, a dynamic which has intensified with deepening authoritarianism. This dynamic reproduces and reinforces power networks among the new generation of CPP elites, to the detriment of activists within the part of civil society that is not endorsed by the state.

There is also variation among different civil society sectors in terms of the role that they play in relation to elite interaction and integration. The case studies highlight the key role of the agrarian/agricultural sector. In both Indonesia (Chapter 10) and Cambodia (Chapter 9), a number of civil society activists from this subfield have crossed over to state and/or political fields to advance their agendas. In Indonesia, this stems from the fact that activists in this subfield have been characterised by political mindedness ever since the New Order Era. The activists include a mix of grassroots, students and

pro-reform activists, who are motivated by the prospect of political change. In Cambodia, civil society activists who have, since the 1990s, promoted the interests of farmers through programmes aimed at poverty reduction and rural development are deeply involved in issues relating to livelihoods at the grassroots, which are inherently political. The sector has been transformed to be largely dominated by the private sector with links to the state elite, which has eroded the standing of civil society actors in agriculture from the perspective of the government. This has resulted in more conflictual relations between the state elite and civil society elite, in relation to the links that some prominent civil society activists have with oppositional politics. It has also resulted in civil society elite actors becoming involved in business innovation.

In Indonesia, the anti-corruption subfield is also identified as an important source of boundary crossing. As a sector that emerged with the reform movement and has been key to advancing the democratisation agenda, activists in this subfield, in accordance with this, tend to be politically-minded. In Cambodia, the youth sector is an important source of boundary crossing. This reflects the way in which it has become a strategic subfield through which to contest and reinforce state power, in connection with a demographic shift to an increasingly young population.

In sum, processes of elite interaction and integration may include civil society, the state, political and economic society. Elite interaction ranges from limited and irregular to practices of boundary crossing. The same forms of capital that are key to becoming influential civil society activists in the two countries – social capital and knowledge capital – are also key for enabling elite interaction and boundary crossing. These processes occur both at the local and national levels, and are shaped by the type of CSO, the type of civil society sector and the type of local or national context. The type of political regime is important, and our case studies underscore the difficulties faced by influential activists within independent civil society, in an authoritarian context, in interactions with members of the state elite. Nevertheless, unlike in Indonesia, interactions with state and political elites are crucial for Cambodian civil society elites. There are different pathways for boundary crossing. In Indonesia, boundary crossing is typically either both to the political field and the state; or to the state field directly. In Cambodia, leading independent civil society activists have crossed into oppositional electoral politics, whereas prominent figures in CSOs endorsed by the authoritarian state have become even more integrated into the state. There is also significant variation across civil society sectors or fields.

How does Reliance on Foreign Funding Influence Processes of Elite Formation and Interaction?

The formation of elites within civil societies in the global South must be understood in the context of foreign funding. Support for civil society, typically understood as NGOs, has been an important part of development aid for many decades. Financial support for NGOs has been an important aspect of policies aimed at the promotion of democracy on the part of most major donor agencies since the 1990s. Civil society in Cambodia has been particularly dependent on foreign funding, as discussed in Chapter 3. There has been a good deal of foreign funding for Indonesian civil society too, especially in certain sectors, but overall Indonesian CSOs have had access to more diverse funding opportunities and have been less aid-dependent than those in Cambodia. Several of the Indonesian CSOs analysed in this book received no or limited foreign funding. The youth organisation Ketjilbergerak, for instance, is not registered and therefore cannot receive foreign funding (Chapter 5). Another organisation established by students, Ininnawa, did not receive funds from donor organisations in its early years as it was formed as a community-based organisation rather than as an NGO (Chapter 5 and 8). However, human rights and anti-corruption CSOs in Indonesia have benefited from extensive foreign funding (Chapter 7). As argued in Chapter 4, international donors offering programmes designed to 'democratise' post-authoritarian Indonesia have played an important role in the development of civil society in the country.

While our case studies confirm that donor priorities tend to favour formal NGOs with the capacity to manage foreign grants, it should be noted that in the case of Cambodia even community-based forest protection networks, which did not have this formal organisational structure, have received foreign funding.

As suggested in Chapter 7, foreign funding may influence processes of elitisation in two main ways. First, by shaping new civil society fields and supporting the emergence of new CSOs dominating these fields. Second, by contributing to the reproduction of elites within recipient CSOs, through the funding of specific leadership training programmes as well as through the promotion of certain understandings of what is important for civil society leadership, for instance in terms of requiring financial management skills or through promoting gender equality. As demonstrated in Chapter 7, foreign funding has been instrumental in shaping both the human rights and the anti-corruption fields in Indonesia. Foreign aid has enhanced actors'

capacities by providing them with important capital enabling them to initiate CSOs. Funding from international donors accelerated LBH/YLBHI's efforts to define the human rights sector by supporting particular programmes under the authoritarian New Order regime. In post-authoritarian Indonesia, anti-corruption has emerged as a prominent civil society field with extensive donor support. New CSOs, such as ICW and FITRA, have been set up with the help of foreign funding. Hence, international donors have contributed to the creation of the human rights and anti-corruption fields in Indonesia.

Chapter 7 further shows that foreign funding can play a role in the reproduction of civil society elites. Funding can be directly geared towards recruiting new activists, and hence regenerating leadership, but can also contribute to transferring values, ideologies and instrumental goals to new cadres. The LBH/YLBHI has used foreign funding to support recruitment programmes. As a professional organisation, the LBH conducts cadre recruitment and selection through an annual volunteer training programme known as the Workshop for Legal Aid. Training programmes for new leaders operated by the YLBHI are partly supported by foreign funding. Moreover, in relation to women's leadership, foreign funding tends to enhance opportunities for women to achieve leadership positions in Indonesian CSOs. International donors have encouraged a gender-aware culture and have promoted the application of quotas in the recruitment and selection mechanisms within organisations, thereby promoting gender equality in staff and leadership. There have been similar processes at play in the anti-corruption field. Previously, the ICW relied primarily on informal recruitment mechanisms, i.e. internships and members' personal connections with pro-democracy activists. However, with the support of foreign funding, and in the context of the increased accountability and transparency that donors have required, the organisation has implemented more formal training sessions as part of its selection process to identify new leaders. The ICW has also identified fund management skills as a basic requirement for staff selection, indicating the importance of foreign funding. International donors have also influenced the recruitment of new leaders in FITRA, which recruits new cadres by creating internships to meet the needs of its programmes at the local level.

Our Cambodian case studies provide similar examples of the impact that international donors have had on civil society elite formation. Chapter 6 shows how certain civil society activists in the Prey Lang Community Network (PLCN) and the Monks' Community Forest (MCF) gained knowledge

capital from technical and legal trainings initiated by international donors. In the case of PLCN, foreign advisors were involved in the setting up of the network from its very beginnings, and foreign funding from different channels served to cement the elites that then emerged, later institutionalising them through the introduction of formal elections. As for the MCF, the initiative emerged from an individual Buddhist monk without foreign involvement, but here too a string of development partners soon came to be involved. The Community Forestry International (CFI) translated existing forest governance arrangements into a community forestry framework. While they helped organise elections across Cambodian community forests, an exception was apparently made for the MCF, because elections seemed antithetical to the hierarchical arrangements within the monks' forest. Foreign funding did not change the existing leadership arrangements, but further institutionalised the leadership that was already in place.

While the analysis in Chapter 7 clearly shows that foreign funding can be instrumental in the emergence of new CSOs and civil society fields, and that it might also be an important factor in processes of elite reproduction, it has had a lesser impact on the maintenance of civil society elite status. Foreign funding is generally not sufficient for CSO leaders to maintain political influence as 'points of reference'. Their continued elite status is determined more by leaders' individual knowledge, networks and mobilisation skills than by the availability of foreign funding. The reduced availability of donor funds for Indonesian CSOs during the last 15 years has had a limited effect on elite reproduction, as CSO leaders have already implemented their values and agendas in their fields, thereby enabling them to maintain dominant field positions.

Case studies from Cambodia also suggest that foreign funding becomes less important once civil society leaders have gained elite status. As shown in Chapter 6, having attained government recognition and the symbolic capital that this bestows, the MCF was less interested in securing foreign funding and became increasingly selective in engaging with development partners. The PLCN also accepts donations cautiously as these might affect its reputation as an interest group that is not driven by economic incentives. Respect and recognition in the local community is important to sustain civil society elite status and foreign funding might even be detrimental in this respect.

Funding (foreign and other) means the introduction of new economic capital into the field of civil society. This capital is not equally distributed, but tends to be concentrated within certain CSOs and also to be controlled by

specific individual leaders within the CSOs that are receiving aid. The introduction of new capital into the field influences positions and position-taking, providing certain actors with more power and influence in relation to other actors. This capital is the object of competition between different actors and it empowers those actors who manage to control it. However, funding from donor agencies should not only be considered as economic capital. It also entails knowledge capital, something that is stressed both in the case of Cambodian forest conservation movements (Chapter 6) and Indonesian CSOs in the human rights and anti-corruption fields (Chapter 7). Numerous capacity building and leadership training programmes testify to the importance of knowledge capital in relation to foreign funding of CSOs.

Norms, values and symbolic practices constitute dimensions of foreign funding that bestow other forms of capital. New relations with funding agencies may offer participation in social networks that strengthen the elite position of certain CSOs and individual leaders, offering social capital. This capital can also be converted into political capital when it provides access to national policy making, as in the case of ICW in Indonesia. An interesting example of social capital linked to foreign funding is the recognition gained through international prizes. As described in Chapter 6, the leader of the MCF received the UNDP Equator Prize and several other international awards, which also led to government support. Development partners thus helped accumulate social capital that was converted to political capital. The PLCN has also received several international prizes and this recognition has improved the way in which state authorities view the work of the PLCN. The prominent Indonesian legal aid and anti-corruption activist Teten Mazduki, who has now joined the government (Chapter 10), has received the prestigious Ramon Magsaysay Award.

Hence, foreign funding may typically have an indirect impact on elite interaction and boundary crossing, whereas its impact on elite formation is more direct. In some cases, however, foreign funding can undermine existing CSO elites. This was the case for PLCN, when the USAID-supported project 'Greening Prey Lang', launched in 2019, effectively replaced the PLCN with an alternative network. The project highlighted the dependence of donors on supporting the government agenda under increasingly authoritarian conditions, in turn circumscribing leading civil society activists who found themselves unable to partner with international development agencies. In 2021, the United States suspended assistance to government entities under the project, because it was perceived to have failed to protect Prey Lang.

In sum, Indonesia and (even more so) Cambodia have experienced extensive foreign funding for large sections of their civil societies. Foreign funding is important for processes of elite formation and indirectly also for processes of boundary crossing. Donors have typically favoured formal NGOs, but community-based forest protection networks in Cambodia have also received foreign funding. Foreign funding influences processes of elitisation in two main ways. First, by shaping new civil society fields and supporting the emergence of new CSOs dominating these fields. Second, by contributing to elite reproduction within recipient CSOs. However, foreign funding becomes less important once civil society leaders have gained elite status. Funding is obviously about economic capital, but it also entails knowledge capital and social capital. These forms of capital, acquired through foreign funding, can be converted into political capital through processes of boundary crossing.

Implications for Future Research

In this section, we discuss how the empirical findings presented above can be theorised, providing some building blocks for a theory of civil society elites. We further specify the implications of our studies for research on civil society in Southeast Asia.

Theorising Civil Society Elites

While classical elite research did pay some attention to civil society elites (Mills 2000 [1956]; Michels 1962), most contemporary elite scholarship tends to ignore the civil society sphere (Khan 2012; Korsnes et al. [eds] 2018). Meanwhile, research on civil society has rarely considered processes of elitisation. We argue that a focus on civil society elites can provide new avenues for elite theories as well as innovative ways of theorising civil society. In doing this, we align with and contribute to recent scholarship on civil society elites (Haryanto 2020; Johansson & Uhlin 2020; Lay & Eng 2020; Lindellee & Scaramuzzino 2020; Norén-Nilsson & Eng, 2020). Based on the analyses in this book, we sketch out some key building blocks of a civil society elite theory, which we suggest should be further developed and tested in future research. We do this by addressing five core questions.

First, *what distinguishes civil society elites from non-elites?* A theory of civil society elites needs to begin with an understanding of how to distinguish elite

activists from non-elites. The approach taken in this book is that elite actors hold dominant field positions in relation to those who are not elite actors. Elite actors control various kinds of resources or capital that give them disproportionate power within and beyond fields. Elite status in civil society may be linked to formal leadership positions in relatively influential organisations, but this is not always the case. Our empirical studies indicate that people who do not hold any formal position within a CSO, for example the founder of the organisation, may still enjoy considerably more power and influence compared not only to ordinary members but also to people in formal leadership positions. Hence, holding a formal leadership position within a CSO is not sufficient to mean that one is counted a member of the civil society elite. The identification of elite and non-elite individuals within civil society, as in other fields, must be based on an analysis of power relations in the field in question.

Second, *what distinguishes the civil society elite from other elites?* We have suggested a conceptualisation of civil society as a sphere analytically distinct from but interrelated with the state and with political and economic society. Elite status in a capitalist economy, and in society more broadly, is to a large extent determined by the accumulation of economic capital. Elite positions within the state can also draw on the power of formal decision-making structures, and ultimately on coercive power. While economic capital and political power can also play a role for elite status in civil society, civil society elite actors rely more heavily on legitimacy based on normative values and representative claims, as well as on specific knowledge and skills. Hence, what has been called 'soft power' or 'normative power' is more important for elite status in civil society than in other societal spheres.

Third, *how can we analyse civil society elites?* Our analysis of civil society elite formation and interaction has been based on a relational field approach (cf. Emirbayer 1997). Understanding elite actors as those who hold dominant positions in relation to subordinate positions within a field, or multiple overlapping fields, offers a dynamic process-oriented way of studying elites. The 'thinking tools' of field and capital that we have borrowed from Bourdieu (1996) have proved useful in our empirical analyses. However, we also observe that other types of capital than those originally conceptualised by Bourdieu play an important role in the processes of elite formation and interaction in Cambodia and Indonesia that we are studying here. In particular, we note the significance of knowledge capital for civil society elite activists across country and civil society sector contexts. We also note the key role of a form

of political capital that civil society elite actors acquire in interaction with political elite actors. While the focus on knowledge capital and political capital aligns well with established conceptualisations of capital, we also propose a somewhat more substantial critique of dominant approaches to field analysis. Two important dimensions in relation to understanding the emergence of civil society elites are gender and age. These dimensions deserve more attention than has been usual in most field analytical elite studies.

While some of the civil society organisations and networks studied in this book have had several prominent female leaders (for example Perspectives Cambodia and the Indonesian Legal Aid Institute), most civil society elite figures in our case studies are men. Processes of elite formation in civil society – as elsewhere – are gendered processes that in general favour men. Female activists within the youth-led organisation Ininnawa in Makassar, Indonesia, have, for instance, found that they have had to resign when they get married, because of social pressure (Chapter 5). While the organisation actively seeks to counter such traditional perceptions of gender roles, these normative structures have nevertheless affected processes of elite formation within this organisation. The forest conservation networks in Cambodia studied in Chapter 6 are led by men and, particularly in the case of the Monks' Community Forest, it is considered inappropriate for women to patrol the forest side by side with monks. Hence, women may support the network through donations, but they cannot take part in other activities, let alone gain any leadership positions. The other forest conservation network analysed in Chapter 6 has one female leader, although most leading positions are held by men. In fact, the woman who does hold a leading position within this male-dominated field suggested that being a woman was an advantage, as she could avoid intimidation in a way that her male colleagues could not, because the authorities would not take a woman seriously and would be embarrassed to harass her. Certain civil society sectors tend to be less hostile towards female leaders. The anti-corruption sector in Indonesia features some significant feminist activism and there have been some female leaders, even if the most prominent elite positions tend to be occupied by men. The Indonesian Legal Aid Institute is known for a culture promoting gender equality, pushed by international donors, and has had several female leaders (Chapter 7). Other CSOs in the human rights sector in Indonesia have also produced several female elite figures, including prominent boundary crossers to the political field, for example in the case of Bengkel APPeK in Kupang (Chapter 8). Foreign donors, which endorse gender equality in all of the

programmes they support, have contributed to the emergence of female civil society leaders in post-Soeharto Indonesia. Taken together, these examples suggest that gender is an important dimension in processes of elite formation and interaction. This is something that should be integrated into what have sometimes been gender-blind field approaches to elite studies.

Another important dimension that comes through strongly as important for elite formation in our case studies is age and generational differences, though this has not been highlighted in traditional field approaches. The analysis in Chapter 5 clearly demonstrates the importance of youth-led organisations for the reproduction of civil society elites and, indeed, of elites in general. Youth organisations are important for the socialisation of new leaders in and beyond civil society and deserve special attention in research on civil society elites. Meanwhile, an older generation of elite activists, those who have established CSOs and in some cases have even shaped civil society fields, continue to dominate these fields. They tend to control processes of elite reproduction even after they are no longer in formal leadership positions. This is evident in formal CSOs, such as in the Indonesian human rights and anti-corruption fields (Chapter 7), as well as in informal networks, such as the Cambodian forest conservation networks (Chapter 6). We suggest that future field analyses of civil society elites should pay specific attention to age and generational factors.

Fourth, *what drives processes of elitisation?* One answer to this question is that formal organisational structures inevitably leads to the creation of elites. In his famous formulation of the 'iron law of oligarchy', Michels (1962) argues that all complex organisations develop into oligarchies. This might of course apply to the CSOs we study, but we also note that civil society networks with less clear and complex organisational structures tend to experience similar processes of elite formation. Another answer to this question that we stress in this volume is the introduction of foreign funding. Our case studies demonstrate how international donors contribute to shaping civil society elites in aid-dependent civil societies such as Cambodia and Indonesia. Yet another answer to this question is that civil society elites emerge through interaction with other elite types. Interaction with, and possibly boundary crossing to, the state, political, and economic fields provides civil society leaders with certain capitals that enhance their elite status.

Fifth, *why does it matter?* The existence of civil society elites has important political implications. Civil society elite figures who can exercise power beyond the civil society sphere as well as within it contribute to policy-making

on local, national and international scenes. This might imply that a broader set of voices are heard and that new perspectives that would otherwise have remained marginalised can push political decisions in directions that are beneficial for the common good. But it might also mean that narrow interests and unrepresentative figures get disproportionate political influence. Within civil society, and within specific CSOs, processes of elitisation may create tensions and problems of legitimacy. The concentration of power within certain elite CSOs and with individual members of elites within these organisations may in these cases be problematic from a democratic perspective. Whichever the dynamic, we suggest that the phenomenon of civil society elites should be analysed in relation to theories of democracy.

In sum, we propose that a theory of civil society elites should begin with an understanding of elites as consisting of actors that hold disproportionate power within and beyond fields, and more specifically, that elite status is linked to control of various kinds of resources that put elites in dominant positions in relation to non-elites. Civil society elite actors have elite status beyond their organisation and sometimes even beyond the civil society field. Unlike members of an economic elite, who control economic capital, and members of a state elite, who can also rely on coercive power, members of a civil society elite rely heavily on legitimacy based on normative values and representative claims, as well as on specific knowledge. We suggest that a field approach that highlights the role of different types of capital is best suited for analysing the formation and interactions of civil society elites. In particular, we stress the role of forms of capital that go beyond Bourdieu's conceptualisation to also include knowledge capital and political capital. Moreover, we see a limitation in dominant field theories in their failure to adequately incorporate gender and age dimensions into the analysis of elites. In terms of drivers of elitisation, we acknowledge the importance of formal organisational structures, but also highlight two factors that have not received similar attention in mainstream elite research; namely foreign funding and interaction with other elite types. Finally, we suggest that the phenomenon of civil society elites should be analysed in relation to theories of democracy.

Implications for Studying Civil Society in Southeast Asia

The analysis presented in this book opens new research frontiers on processes of elitisation within and beyond civil society in Southeast Asia. It suggests a

new direction for civil society research, focusing on power relations, resources and elite status within civil society and in relation to the state and other social spheres. The analytical focus on civil society elites reveals power dynamics that define interactions between elites in civil society and other social spheres. Individuals reach leading positions within and beyond civil society by mobilizing resources, which they use, gain and lose when they interact with, and sometimes integrate into, the state, political and economic fields. This calls for a new research agenda focusing on the power relations that link civil society with the state and with political and economic society.

The book advances the strand of research on Southeast Asian civil societies that charts the fuzzy boundaries between engaging in civil society and the state, which considers civil society, the state and electoral politics as parallel modes of engagement (Jayasuriya & Rodan 2007; Mietzner 2013; Weiss 2017). The field theoretical approach we have taken is useful, we argue, in rethinking civil society in Southeast Asia and elsewhere, since it locates an elite within the structure of a particular field of engagement. This perspective goes beyond previous analyses, which have taken the perspectives and strategies of either states or activists as their starting-point.

The findings of this book have implications for how we understand the strength of civil society in the two countries and beyond. As stated in the opening chapter, we consider the emergence of elites to be inherent to, and ubiquitous within, social life – something that is applicable to civil society, just as it is to other social spheres. Attention to the dynamics of elite formation and interaction sheds light, however, on the strength of civil society in a particular setting. The emergence of civil society elites in Indonesia since *reformasi* coincides with a trend of declining international donor support, meaning more competition to access resources. Elite groups within civil society are, in this context, in a far more advantageous position than non-elites. This has at least two main implications. *First*, the elitisation of civil society has left those who do not belong to the elite behind. This makes inequalities among CSOs starker, which strengthens some parts of civil society, while at the same time undermining others. *Second*, when civil society elite actors move into state or political party arenas, whether this is at the national or at the local level, this can lead to (parts of) civil society gaining more political influence, which would strengthen the relevance of civil society as a political arena. However, this requires that prominent civil society activists who move to take up leading positions in the state or political parties maintain close links to non-elite civil

society organisations, networks and movements, which often seems not to be the case. When boundary crossing is mainly a career path for individual civil society activists, this process lessens the strength and significance of civil society as a field of social action in Indonesia. In Cambodia, the emergence of influential civil society elite activists has enabled these individuals to secure outcomes and even to strengthen local civil society in some settings, but it has been harder for them to strengthen their respective civil society subfields at a national level. The crossing of prominent civil society activists to oppositional politics has led to civil society coming to be considered a battleground by the state, which has weakened it, particularly compared to the technocratic heyday of the 1990s. At the same time, the integration and co-optation of some leading civil society elite activists into the state has opened up state-sponsored civil society as a novel field of possibility and power in which agendas can be pushed.

The findings of this book also have implications for debates about the role of civil society for democracy and democratisation in Southeast Asia. The widespread neo-Tocquevillian assumption that civil society has an inherent ability to promote democracy has been proven incorrect in many parts of Southeast Asia. Drawing attention to the presence of 'uncivil society', civil society groups with a dark side, authors have, in different country contexts including Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines and Myanmar, demonstrated the role of such groups in democratic backsliding (Thompson 2008; Beittinger-Lee 2013; Hewison 2017; Lorch 2021). 'Uncivil society' is now commonly understood to constitute a subset of civil society (Pawakapan 2013).

The body of literature focusing on the incivility of civil society has drawn attention to the role of elites. Discussing the Philippines, Hedman (2006) finds that elite groups have claimed to speak *in the name of* civil society so as to uphold their hegemony, whilst Thompson (2008) argues that elite groups in the Philippines and Thailand, in particular those made up of business leaders, have backed the protests against elected leaders. This literature also pinpoints the interconnectedness between civil society, the state, electoral politics and the economic field, and holds that civil society must be analysed within its political context, including its implications in relation to processes of democratisation (Pawakapan 2013: 9–10; Beittinger-Lee 2013) as well as in relation to the undoing of democracy (Hewison 2017).

The analysis presented in this book at once deepens and goes beyond these insights. It opens up a space in which to consider the democratic impact of individual elite activists who, though possibly democratically-minded in the

context of civil society, may pursue other agendas elsewhere. Donor institutions that support civil society elites may unwittingly contribute to solidifying elites, whose members may then pursue competing objectives that defy the original democratisation agenda. One example from Indonesia, presented in Chapter 7, is Munarman, who used the knowledge capital he had accumulated through the Legal Aid Institute (LBH) to then move on to join an Islamic militant party. In Cambodia, similar patterns may be observed. International organisations, including the International Republican Institute and the National Democratic Institute, funded leadership programmes that were meant to build young civil society leaders. Many of these left civil society to become young CPP politicians who assumed positions in government, some of whom were deeply implicated in the reorientation to hegemonic authoritarian rule.

Our analysis therefore proposes a more comprehensive conceptualisation than existing literature of how civil society, through its elite, can either further or undermine democracy. This perspective also suggests, conversely, that some influential civil society actors may be more significant democratising agents than acknowledged in the literature that treats civil society as a separate social field which has the inherent capacity to promote democratisation. We find that they may contribute or seek to contribute to democratisation, including through elite interaction (e.g. in the anti-corruption field in Indonesia, discussed in Chapter 7) or through boundary crossing (e.g. the example of CEDAC leaders in Cambodia, discussed in Chapter 9).

In sum, our study has important implications for research on civil society in Southeast Asia. We propose a new research agenda focusing on the power relations that link civil society with the state and with political and economic society. The field theoretical approach we have taken locates the position-takings of elite actors within the structure of a particular field of engagement and can thereby contribute to a rethinking of civil society in Southeast Asia and elsewhere. We also suggest that our findings have implications for debates about the role of civil society for democracy and democratisation in Southeast Asia, as we provide a more comprehensive conceptualisation than does existing literature of how civil society, through its elite actors, can either further or undermine democracy.

Concluding Remarks

This book has brought together two fields of research – civil society studies and elite studies – into an analysis of civil society elites. Our findings challenge

a view of civil society entities as relatively isolated from the state and from political and economic society, by revealing the power relations that link them. Besides contributing to a rethinking of civil society in Cambodia and Indonesia, the book opens new research frontiers on processes of elitisation within and beyond civil society. It suggests a new direction for civil society research, focusing on power relations, resources and elite status within civil society and in relation to the state and other social spheres.

These findings have potential implications not only for research, but also for civil society and donor practice. The book shows that the role of international donor institutions in Indonesia and Cambodia is significant for the formation and reproduction of civil society elites. The elite figures who emerge from these processes may become prominent actors not only in the civil society field per se, but also in interactions between spheres and through boundary crossing. This calls for a more comprehensive analysis of the different roles played by the civil society elite with which donors engage. Donor agencies predominantly employ quantitative tools of measurement to evaluate their projects. Our findings call into question such simplistic measurements of project outcomes, to look beyond specific projects to their 'afterlives' through the activities of elite individuals who have been associated with such projects.

For civil society activists, this book suggests the possibility of expanding the notion of activism. It proposes to incorporate interactions with members of elites from other fields into a more comprehensive notion of activism. However, it also highlights the key problem of how to strike a balance between efforts to increase political influence and the risk of being co-opted when moving from civil society to other fields. This book allows activists to identify overall patterns impacting on the efficiency of action and on the chances of success in pursuing their agendas in different fields during different overall democratic and authoritarian conditions.

Processes of elitisation are already debated within civil society. Some see the formation of civil society elites and their integration with political and economic elites as contributing to and reflecting increased inequalities in society at large and as threatening the claims of CSOs to popular representation. Others view elitisation as both unavoidable (as all organisations and networks require some kind of leadership) and desirable (as elite activists can influence politics in positive directions). While we have used the 'elite' concept in a neutral way, trying to avoid normative connotations, the book opens up the possibility of normative discussions about the phenomenon of civil society elites. Based

on different normative perspectives, readers may identify different desirable as well as undesirable features of the processes empirically studied in this book. This may lead to reflections among civil society activists on how to best navigate contemporary civil society fields characterised by power inequalities and processes of elitisation. Donor agencies, on their part, may reflect on how to best continue to promote the development of civil society while avoiding the negative aspects of elitisation that may result from foreign funding. We believe that a more thorough awareness of these processes, which this book has hopefully provided, is a good starting point for such discussions within civil society as well as within the donor community.

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Appendix

Fieldwork Guide

Focus and aims	Specific focus/ Themes to be covered	Methods for data collection	Operational questions
I. Production and reproduction of civil society elites Aims: 1. To understand how new elite actors emerge within the selected civil society organisations and networks	• Processes of recruitment and appointment of new leaders • Training courses for leaders • Values and other characteristics of leaders • Relationships between leaders and followers (non-leaders)	*1. Desk study (based on available documents and secondary sources)*	• How can the civil society organisation/network be described? How is it funded? • How can the larger field (civil society sector) in which the organisation/network operates be described? • What are the biographical profiles of leaders in the organisation/network? • What documents (if any) are available on leadership recruitment and training?

2. To understand how elites are reproduced within the selected civil society organisations and networks
3. To understand the role of different kinds of capital in the (re)production of civil society elites

2. Interviews

Possible respondents:

- Current leaders responsible for recruitment and appointment procedures
- People who have been appointed to leadership positions
- People who were considered for leadership positions, but were not appointed
- People in charge of leadership training programmes
- People who have participated in leadership training programmes
- Members/activists who are not in any leading position
- Members/activists who have criticised the leadership

General questions:

- Describe the process of recruiting/appointing new leaders! Give examples of such processes! Are they formal or informal?
- How do incumbents control the recruitment/appointment process?

For people in leading positions:

- What motivated you to apply for your current position?
- What qualifications were important for you in gaining your current position?
- What strategies did you employ for becoming a leader? What strategies were successful/not successful?
- Who was the most important actor helping you to your leadership position?

General questions:

- Is there any leadership training programme within the organisation/network? If so, please describe it! What are the reasons for having it? What is the content of the programme? What have been the outcome of the programme?

- What are the most important qualifications of a leader in your organisation/network? Has this changed over time?
- What makes a leader legitimate? (Probe with performance, charismatic, traditional, democratic sources!) Has this changed over time?
- Are leaders expected to be accountable? What are the mechanisms of accountability?
- Who are the most important/influential leaders in your organisation/network? Are they formally appointed or is their leadership informal?
- How often are formal and informal leaders the same person? When they are not the same person, what problems (if any) do that cause?

For people in leading positions:

- Who do you work with in the organisation/network?
- Can you take decisions by yourself, or do you need to consult others?

			• What is your main agenda? • What changes have you implemented since you gained your current leading position? • What is your plan when you have accomplished your mission? • What are the most difficult challenges you have faced as a leader of this organisation/network? How have you handled these challenges?
II. Individual boundary crossers Aims: 1. To understand the process of crossing boundaries between fields	• Personal and professional background of prominent boundary crossers. • Motivations and values of prominent boundary crossers. • Boundary crossing experiences.	*1. Desk study (based on available documents and secondary sources)*	• What personal background information on the person to be interviewed is publicly available? • What do we know about his/her career (CV etc.)? • Are there any biographies or documentaries?

2. To understand what kind of capital is used, gained, or lost when moving between fields	*2. Biographical life-history interviews* Possible respondents: • Individuals holding leading positions in CSOs who have a background as leaders in other social spheres, such as business and politics • Individuals who have moved from leading positions within civil society to take up influential positions in politics, business or other social spheres • We should start with current and former leaders in our selected civil society organisations/networks	• Please tell me about your childhood and education! Are there any important factors or events that have been significant for you reaching the position you have today? What were your goals and motivations as a child/teenager? • When did you first become active in a civil society organisation/movement? • Please tell me about your professional career! What work experiences do you have? • What experiences do you have of moving between civil society and other sectors such as politics and business? • Why did you decide to move to/from civil society? • Was boundary crossing facilitated by networks with elites in other sectors? How were those contacts made? • What competencies and resources did you bring from civil society to your current field/from your previous field to civil society? • What would you say are the main differences between civil society and the other field(s) you have experience from? • What has been the reaction from former and current colleagues to your boundary crossing? • What are your views of the possibilities in civil society work? How does this compare to possibilities in other fields from which you have experience?

- How do you evaluate your boundary crossing experience (drawbacks/misgivings/successes)?
- How do you primarily self-identify (e.g. civil society actor, political party actor, government advisor, businessman/woman)?

Colour illustrations

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About the editors: **Astrid Norén-Nilsson** is a senior lecturer at the Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies, Lund University, Sweden. Her scholarship focuses on the politics of contemporary Cambodia. **Amalinda Savirani** is an associate professor at the Department of Politics and Government, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia. She has published widely on civil society movements in Indonesia. **Anders Uhlin** is Professor of Political Science at Lund University. His research centres on civil society activism, particularly in Southeast Asia.

NIAS PRESS
www.niaspress.dk

ISBN 978-87-7694-329-5